

Talk:Alleged Chemical Attack, August 21, 2013

From A Closer Look On Syria

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Rebels in Ghouta admit responsibility?

Breaking: AP journalist publishes story claiming al-Qaeda and Saudi Prince Bandar bin Sultan were responsible for carrying out the Ghouta gas attack! (See Tubes in tunnels? below)

- **EXCLUSIVE:** Syrians In Ghouta Claim Saudi-Supplied Rebels Behind Chemical Attack (<http://www.mintpressnews.com/witnesses-of-gas-attack-say-saudis-supplied-rebels-with-chemical-weapons/168135/>) – By Dale Gavlak and Yahya Ababneh | MintPress News, August 29, 2013

Rebels and local residents in Ghouta accuse Saudi Prince Bandar bin Sultan of providing chemical weapons to an al-Qaida linked rebel group.

I don't know about the author or Mint Press, but I don't trust this report. Some odd writing, some really odd quotes. Maybe I need to re-read it, but first pass felt weird. They can point right at Bandar, and cite the spooky tunnels, which both make enough sense, but then they consistently claim there was an accident, in (9 towns?) at once, accidentally killing hundreds, or 1,000+, because of improper training? Right after the CW inspectors came? Was there a coordinated mass-handling of those mysterious canisters that night by the duped rebels, and then timers were set off? How many people would blame themselves and accident for that? It's a bizarre story and I suspect disinfo/propaganda, one way or another. I'm pretty sure whoever did whatever, they did it on purpose. --Caustic Logic (talk) 10:42, 30 August 2013 (UTC)

I shouldn't be quite so harsh. If one strips away the 8-9 towns and considers, as described, just one accident - and perhaps not coincidence but related to a plan to have them unwittingly release the gas, ... Maybe there was an accident involved, and those who survived it felt it was THE explanation. But instead, it would coincide with whatever other actions, by whoever, that led to however many deaths that this alone can hardly explain. --Caustic Logic (talk) 12:02, 30 August 2013 (UTC)

There could have been more "accidents" and isn't it possible that these things had some radio (edit: or better time - one year red line) triggered release mechanism? Would be a cunning plan worthy of Bandar Bush - you distribute the stuff to your vanilla rebels who store it somewhere near their homes, so you can be sure there will be rebel areas affected when you release it. At least possible. Anyway, I share your general skepticism about the article to a degree, although the author seems to be kind of legit and could have the proper contacts. --CE (talk) 12:33, 30 August 2013 (UTC)

When I first read the article, it sounded so un-fucking-believable for mainstream media that I thought the author was Sorcha Faal of *WhatDoesItMean.com* (<http://www.WhatDoesItMean.com>). The fact is however, that Dale Gavlak is a respected journalist for AP. Quoting InfoWars.com (<http://www.infowars.com/rebels-admit-responsibility-for-chemical-weapons-attack/>)

Dale Gavlak's credibility is very impressive. He has been a Middle East correspondent for the Associated Press for two decades and has also worked for National Public Radio (NPR).

It is likely Dale Gavlak will never again write anything for any mainstream media. The story however is as credible as anything the the mainstream press has ever printed. -- Petri Krohn (talk) 14:50, 30 August 2013 (UTC)

How can you believe the story when they say "rebels were responsible" and not believe it when it says "it was an accident". There is no contradiction here. The Mint Press article does not tell us what really happened – that we will have to find out by our self by investigations. It only tells us what the locals and rebels *believe* has happened. They also happen to be the only journalists reporting from Ghouta. What they tell us is that the rebel and locals are ready to admit to anyone who asks (except the UN investigators *) that it was their chemical weapons that were used. They are unwilling to admit or even believe that they were used intentionally, thus the psychological defense of "it was an accident". Openly admitting that their party is guilty of genocide would amount to switching sides in the war.

(* No witness will tell the truth to UN investigators, as the UN team is always accompanied by armed al-Nusra or rebel minders.) -- Petri Krohn (talk) 15:31, 30 August 2013 (UTC)

Murder investigation, part 2

At this point we need to revert back to the core Assadist hypothesis. Hostages from Latakia, from Tal Abyad in Kurdistan, or from where ever were gassed in some confined space, then left dead or dying at the hospital. Some teargas was released here and there to cause panic. Drops of sarin were left somewhere for the UN team to find. The task now is to negate this hypothesis. We need to find real witness testimony and *in situ* footage.

1. Video of dead family killed in their home.
2. Video of family member or neighbor, *in situ*, describing how the whole family was killed.
3. Video of dead animals *in situ*.
4. Video of the attack site, empty houses, without fresh bomb damage, abandoned in panic or cleared of dead bodies.
5. Lists of victims with addresses.
6. Any sign that the claimed victims ever lived in the effected areas.

So far I have seen none of this, except for the one fly-in-your-face fraud. I have not looked for new material after day #1, will start looking now.

It is interesting, that in the al-Bayda and Baniyas massacres in government controlled areas the "activists" were able to act as flies in the roof and film the massacred families *in situ* in their homes, even before the Assadist dumped their bodies on the streets. Yet, in this rebel controlled area activist are not able to provide any *in situ* footage.

Now, find the footage and **prove me wrong!** -- Petri Krohn (talk) 14:40, 29 August 2013 (UTC)

BREAKING: Rescue team finds whole family dead in their house!

I would expect the activist cameramen to follow the rescue teams in the early daylight hours of August 21 as they move into effected areas in the recover bodies and search for survivors. (I mean, man, this is real hardcore massacre porn that could bring in the NATO invasion!) As far as I know no such video has been presented. -- Petri Krohn (talk) 18:04, 29 August 2013 (UTC)

The following section "Planted bodies?" covers the only known *in situ* body recovery, but it is a fly-in-your-face hoax by the known massacre managers from Douma.

Planted bodies?

Can you name the 10 reasons why I believe these bodies are planted? Do your own analysis, I do not want to (mis)guide you.

- Entire Family Killed by Chemical Weapons attack on Damascus (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mypx96MK5N0>) – ANAChannelEng, Aug 24, 2013

Video Description: Video portrays an a building inspection in which a number of families are found dead 36 hours after a chemical weapons attack which took place on Damascus suburbs on the 21st of August 2013 early morning time (presumed at 2:00am)

This video was taken in the Zamalka area of the Eastern Ghouta of Damascus suburbs.

The link comes from Matthew Asheville's blog *Syria Analysis*:

- Entire Family allegedly killed by chemical attack suffered injuries consistent with death by thermobaric weapon (Eastern Ghouta) (<http://syriaanalysis.wordpress.com/2013/08/26/entire-family-allegedly-killed-by-chemical-attack-have-injuries-consistent-with-death-by-thermobaric-weapon-not-chemical-attack/>) – "9 hours ago" (August 27, 2013)

Yeah, the "chemical attack" story may turn out to be bogus, but somehow you must still be able to blame "Assad". -- Petri Krohn (talk) 08:29, 27 August 2013 (UTC)

The video shows no context, it is far too concentrated on massacre porn. We see no proof that anyone ever lived in the house. Plaster and dust everywhere, most likely because the building is unfinished. If the people live here, how do keep their cloths clean and free of the dust? One could also argue, that all the gravel and plaster came from the explosion. If so, why did not any of the dust settle on the bodies?

The crucial question is, why were the bodies planted? Most likely because the "activists" felt they need *in situ* footage and none other was available. Why no *in situ* footage of the chemical attack? Two likely reasons: 1) Many of the victims in fact died in thermobaric blasts. The signs of the explosion would be visible at the attack site. 2) Some of the victims were gassed "in some confined space." -- Petri Krohn (talk) 05:20, 29 August 2013 (UTC)

Well put, fair point. It doesn't even work well to show people allegedly in their homes, but these guys just don't usually seem to care. --Caustic Logic (talk) 12:59, 29 August 2013 (UTC)

Has anyone even counted the victims? I count at least ... eight? Two women, a man (shirt: EMPIRE), three boys, baby girl, older girl whose face is now the grossest. Decay, I guess about three days worth, minimum. Note that puffing tongues and mouths often accompanies decay, but it takes a bit longer - either they're older or it's a mix of FAE pressure/etc. and decay. notes: the woman on the stairs has had her right forearm slashed badly, a chunk of that flesh lays on the stairs, dust-free - but not much visible blood - some has soaked into the dust and dried, but not like from a sliced artery (1:17). Does sarin do that? I don't know what to make of the baby's flattened face (1:33). Is that what a pressure wave does to a softer skull? Or was her face smashed some other way? The man seems to have blood from the top of his head, like a gunshot. --Caustic Logic (talk) 12:59, 29 August 2013 (UTC)

Planted by the known massacre managers?

See also Douma Hostage Massacre

This is disgusting. I hadn't seen the video until now, and I watched it to see how it fits with one I was going to post. Hell, those are the same kids, filmed by a different team! I was over at urs checking what she has to say about the Douma-Harasta gang (I mentioned that yesterday). Remember the group of dead people who also showed up as hostages in other videos? Where we matched the Coca-Cola t-shirt? In this group, Urs says, there's one outstanding "propagandist" who comments the videos, and she's female (never to be seen on camera but with a distinct voice, she says). Now urs has found another video with her voice, uploaded yesterday, and it shows the same kids on the stairs as yours does, but filmed by a different team including that propagandist. Here (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WHU-KA0iP3k>) is the video. It says something like they are still finding victims of the 21st attack, and is dated Aug 28 (uploaded to youtube date Aug 27). I didn't check yet if they are "arranged" differently (this stuff is disgusting). Should be possible to find out which video is earlier - i suspect the one with the "propagandist".

Thanks for bringing that in, awesome. Will read in a minute. These people, Harastans in Douma, I guess it usually is - they seem fascinated with the power of decay. Always, summers in their control, days are taken advantage of to hit us in the stomach as much as the heart. Their massacre from late June last year was like that too. Wasn't that the one with chicken giblets/kids' genital pulled out of trash bins as well? Must be someone's philosophical notion been running things there, and of course this will be filmed in Douma. Right? Let's see if I can compare videos. Eh, will try in a minute. First check says same-day filming, little if any changing. At least some victims look just the same. --Caustic Logic (talk) 12:10, 29 August 2013 (UTC)

See Urs' report here (<http://urs1798.wordpress.com/2013/08/28/giftgas-un-untersuchung-die-douma-kuhlhauspropagandistin-ist-wieder-da-bekannt-fur-durchgeschnittene-kehlen-douma-damascus-syria/>), it has some videos from the UN investigators in Zamalka yesterday, surrounded by "rebels". Here (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cfgjuu23EmU>) they enter Ghouta, followed by "Al Qaeda". --CE (talk) 10:58, 29 August 2013 (UTC)



The dead do not seem to have any surviving relatives. These two in Erbin are the exception.

Cool add. Zamalka. Not much info, but could set a locale, if important enough. I'm not keeping up like I could, but this adds to the UN response stuff below. --Caustic Logic (talk) 12:10, 29 August 2013 (UTC)

Proof that these people didn't die on the 21st?

Urs has found more videos which are likely proof that these people didn't die on the 21st. A first video (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yCqCbcnKEjQ>) was uploaded on the 22nd and shows a small truck load of corpses, among them absolutely clearly the boy with the very green t-shirt and likely the boy with the yellow t-shirt (to the right of the woman to the right of the "green" boy.) The hand and arm of the boy look as if they are in rigor mortis, the face of the woman shows strong signs of decay, I don't know if she is also a match with Petri's video (edit: she definitely is).

The second video (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tGynQ_p3I-U) - and be warned, this is really stomach turning -, uploaded on the 23rd and dated 22nd, shows three children in advanced state of decay being moved to and thrown into a hole. The little girl could be a match with Petri's video, but it seems her skirt is a different pattern of red-black, but the terribly decayed boy in the middle wears a tracksuit which seems to be a clear match with the one the kid lying on his belly at 4:36 in Petri's video wears.

Which means the videos in the stairway must have been filmed days before the "chemical attack", or at least that the people didn't die on the 21st, doesn't it? --CE (talk) 21:57, 29 August 2013 (UTC)

What are the people saying? Are they referring to the gas attacks. The ANAChannelEng video (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mypx96MK5N0>) has English captions. Let's see. *Film him. Let me know if one realize it is because of chemicals?* (0:38 (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mypx96MK5N0&t=0m38s>))

Interestingly the guides are saying they know the people lived there, despite one of the visitors commenting that it does not look as if anyone lived in the house. When the three boys are buried, they are claimed to be "unknown." -- Petri Krohn (talk) 22:57, 29 August 2013 (UTC)

P.S. It does not matter when and where these where people killed. Even if they were killed by "Assad", statements made by Douma body snatchers cannot be the basis for starting World War III. -- Petri Krohn (talk) 23:29, 29 August 2013 (UTC)

Don't worry, they're desperate and will fail miserably. This (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AgxzpQrqSkg>) for your enjoyment, Petri. :o) --CE (talk) 23:39, 29 August 2013 (UTC)

Wow, this is getting interesting. Little surprise, three of the four videos discussed won't convert for me. Non-sharing mentality. But they did post the videos and I got screen grabs saved. I haven't compared all the clothing, but it looks like the same people. That is decay and lots of it, or else thermobarics effects are exactly like decay. Skin blackens, tongue puffs up to fill the mouth, fluids leak out, infected veins become visible, eyes pop out, belly blots, skin starts turning to slime. Maggots are frequently just not visible at the lower resolution. Comparison graphics will be in order, but no ickier than needed (not tonight). Dumped in a hole AFTER being found - a rebel mass grave, for those with no family they're ready to confront yet. On the 22nd at latest. And they were like five days dead by then. Just found on the 24th or 28th, later posted videos say. The latter suggests they think it's seven days decay and the first later video was too early for that to be deaths from the 21st. But they did that rotting, and got scooped up, and buried away from observers, no later than the 22nd, 10 AM Syria time (to be dated 22 if uploaded immediately). Estimated death date, broadly: Aug. 14-18, assuming the 22nd video also wasn't held back from earlier yet. --Caustic Logic (talk) 23:05, 29 August 2013 (UTC)

The three children are the boy in red-blue tracksuit, girl in red, and boy in yellow shirt (RA on front). -- Petri Krohn (talk) 23:25, 29 August 2013 (UTC)

True, we don't need pictures. I'll finish this up. Six of the eight are seen in these burial scenes, the first two seen, a man and a woman, are not included. Comparing the one in situ video I saved to stills from the two Aug. 22 videos, the common victims, in order of appearance in the video, nearly 100% matches in each case = 100% certainty it's the same people:

- boy in red-shouldered, black-trunked track shirt
- Woman in black coat, patterned headscarf
- baby girl in red-and-black dress
- boy in black-yellow-green t-shirt, "R A" on front
- boy in bright green t-shirt, "Cristiano Ronaldo" #7 whatever football team, left sleeve missing (will his fan club fund our research?)
- older girl in yellow and black t-shirt, "Hello Kitty," black capri short pants. --Caustic Logic (talk) 10:02, 30 August 2013 (UTC)

Do Syrian sleep in winter overcoats?

One disturbing aspect of the videos (not these, but all the videos) is the all the victims I have seen are fully dressed. Some, as the ones in the Planted bodies? video, have thick, winter-type overcoats. Do Syrians sleep fully clothed?

One could try to explain this anomaly by claiming that all of Eastern Ghouta was under heavy bombardment and people had gotten dressed to seek shelter. In fact many of the Western news stories inadvertently claimed the chemical attack was preceded by shelling. I have not seen any real proof of this bombardment. It is just a word revolutionaries will repeat in every sentence. The area effected by the chemical attack is huge. Unless the whole Luftwaffe was blitzing them, the safest place for Syrians would be in their own beds. -- Petri Krohn (talk) 01:46, 28 August 2013 (UTC)

Who keeps coats long after winter: the homeless, nowhere else to put it, don't want to loose it. Prisoners not issued uniforms - similar to the last, can take it off in the prison, but will put it on during field trips to abandoned buildings. Especially mothers, instinctively, to hide babies, food, etc. beneath. Any shield you're allowed, you'll bring it. --Caustic Logic (talk) 23:09, 29 August 2013 (UTC)

The Role of Basements

In an early activist video with helpful English subtitles, A statement from Jobar's Medical Point regarding the chemical attack (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RoCT81NcDnc>), an opposition doctor announced gas attacks on Jobar and Ain Tarm areas alone, with "massive" casualties that used up all their supplies. At about 3:45, he explains the mistakes people made, which made it worse for responders, some of who died from all this, leading him to sob. Many people put themselves in basements to escape the gas, which sunk down in concentration and killed them. They should have gone upstairs instead, and he suggests an education campaign to make sure people know that next time. ^[1]--Caustic Logic (talk) 11:39, 30 August 2013 (UTC)

Ben Hubbard andm others filed a report for the New York Times, based on interviews with numerous opposition locals, including rebel doctors, perhaps including that guy but given as plural, who made the same claim.

According to local doctors, some people took cover in basements, where the gas settled and suffocated them. Medics and photographers who had become accustomed to rushing to the site of attacks arrived too quickly, succumbing to the gases themselves. <ref="NYT1" /> --Caustic Logic (talk) 11:39, 30 August 2013 (UTC)

More mysteriously, the Jobar medic mentioned some people started fires while in the basements, I guess to keep warm in the August chill, leading to "undesired consequences" in mixing the toxic gas fumes with "fires and burning tires." Because of "the ignorance of some people," he says, a significant number of people wound up "putting tires on fire," which "added insult to injury," as any idiot could predict. ^[1] --Caustic Logic (talk) 11:39, 30 August 2013 (UTC)

These allegations make little sense. If people truly did wind up gassed in basements that were also choked with the smoke of burning tires, it stands to reason someone else put them in that position. Who would subject themselves to that? This is a chilling possibility considering to two earlier massacres:

- In the Daraya massacre almost exactly one year ago and a few kilometers south, locals say rebel brigades had imprisoned them in large numbers in "shelters," some in basements, they said to protect them from a government massacre. At the end of the government re-conquest, rebel videos appeared of civilians mass executed in basements.
- When rebels in al-Houla captured Alawite Aqrab in December, they took about 500 civilians, including children and women, as hostages, crammed in a large house, denied food and water, and subjected to the smoke of burning tires, before half were released in exchanges and the rest remain unaccounted for.--Caustic Logic (talk) 11:39, 30 August 2013 (UTC)

Alleged Proofs of Government Guilt

Okay, sure, there's no logic to it. But socialist-leaning secular Arab dictators who oppose Israel don't need logic. They just force us to destroy them and we destroy them. It's a basic pattern of nature we're as familiar with as the changing seasons. And of course, there's "mounting" evidence, some call it proof, to prove Assad or a general or anyone but the rebels is responsible. And of course you need good evidence when you're making a case with no logic behind it. --Caustic Logic (talk) 10:44, 28 August 2013 (UTC)

The Phone Call

The intercepted call between Syrians said to prove the attack was first spoken of by a former Israeli Mossad agent and run in the German media.

U.S. Foreign Policy magazine ran a detailed and widely cited piece about it on August 27/28, a week after the attacks: Exclusive: Intercepted Calls Prove Syrian Army Used Nerve Gas, U.S. Spies Say: The conversation is "the major reason why American officials now say they're certain that the attacks were the work of the Bashar al-Assad regime -- and why the U.S. military is likely to attack that regime in a matter of days." So just what was it? As they report:

Last Wednesday, in the hours after a horrific chemical attack east of Damascus, an official at the Syrian Ministry of Defense exchanged panicked phone calls with a leader of a chemical weapons unit, demanding answers for a nerve agent strike that killed more than 1,000 people. Those conversations were overheard by U.S. intelligence services, The Cable has learned.^[2]

First, I'm not certain there even is a "chemical defense unit." But let's say there is, it's the basis of this whole exercise.

Why is the caller panicked and asking questions? Panic suggests sudden realization, questions a lack of knowledge. If it was an order from the government, wouldn't he know about it? Perhaps not. That seems to be one of the questions:

the intercept raises questions about culpability for the chemical massacre, even as it answers others: Was the attack on Aug. 21 the work of a Syrian officer overstepping his bounds? Or was the strike explicitly directed by senior members of the Assad regime? "It's unclear where control lies," one U.S. intelligence official told The Cable. "Is there just some sort of general blessing to use these things? Or are there explicit orders for each attack?" ^[2]

Most important: **the response is not specified. Why?** If he said something like "yes sir, we gassed the rats, on orders from xxx," that would be included. They wouldn't say a guy called and asked, they'd say when he did that, he got confirmation, and they would be quoting it in exact translated words. It'd be in bold headlines "**WE GASSED THE RATS.**" Conversely, if the response was negative, or just as surprised to even hear such a thing was reported, wouldn't that mean the government probably didn't do it? How many other types of response are there? Those are mainly it, and it seems more likely to have been the latter, since they were too embarrassed to include it. --Caustic Logic (talk) 11:18, 28 August 2013 (UTC)

Another possible issue, as the Atlantic Wire points out (<http://www.theatlanticwire.com/national/2013/08/uss-proof-syrian-army-chemical-attack-intercepted-call/68800/>), is that the original source for the recording is a little unclear:

the German magazine Focus spoke to an anonymous Israeli intelligence official, who claims that the intercepted phone call comes from intelligence gathered by one of their elite units. Foreign Policy, however, specifies that U.S. intelligence overheard the call.

Neither claims to be borrowing a copy of the others' recording. Perhaps they both overheard it? I don't see why not.
 --Caustic Logic (talk) 11:18, 28 August 2013 (UTC)

Possibilities:

- Completely faked call: from the description so far and lack of clarity, it sounds unlikely to have been faked. This makes the comment in Qaboun possibly irrelevant as a clue - that would best help with placing a fake call and making it look real.
- Real official, saboteur intent: A secret defector and total backstabber, he was paid to place a call that looks really suspicious. Perhaps why he, but not the guy answering, gets cited. However, you'd think he'd work in a really doomy and damning line worth a direct quote, if so. And that would probably be mentioned, which it wasn't.
- Real official, double-checking, got no clear answer or even a denial: intel officials are twisting and essentially lying about the content, perhaps to let the president make his saber-rattling intimidation dance.
- Real call, with a response that really did confirm the attack, and that just wasn't mentioned in the articles so far, for some reason. --Caustic Logic (talk) 11:18, 28 August 2013 (UTC)
- Sub-sets of the last:
 - The attack was ordered from on high, skipping the caller
 - The attack was done by a rogue officer or whoever acting on their own
 - He was doing it to kill the rats, super-Syrian, badder than the "bad guys"
 - He was a paid defector false-flagging his former employers from the inside to get them bombed, a "good guy"--Caustic Logic (talk) 23:33, 29 August 2013 (UTC)

FOCUS is a miserable rag and the rest of the German media didn't run with the story. I think this is just part of bigmouth back-peddaling. It wasn't the evil Assad, just some rogue element, bla bla. I still think this is all just saber-rattling. UK is now presenting a UN resolution - didn't they say just yesterday that they don't need one? --CE (talk) 11:48, 28 August 2013 (UTC)

Could be. I don't think it taints the story enough though. I could be wrong, but I tend to think the recording really does exist. Notes below. --Caustic Logic (talk) 13:38, 28 August 2013 (UTC)

My further thoughts: I'm going with roughly the third option. I guess how they're presented makes that fairly clear. Reasons: I imagine a lot of communications are intercepted in this day and age. I don't know the details, but ... lots to comb through. It would be foolhardy to make up such a thing and be caught unable to prove it if that became important. And if you faked it, it would be something better than an unanswered panicked question, following panic-inducing global rumors of an action that threatened the nation's undoing. What I think is that the West will try to not release the call, because it will become clearer that the context was badly distorted. And it will dawn on a few people that there's a lot to comb through, they probably combed hard, and this is the best they could find. Conclusion: there was no order, likely no such action. Should shrivel next to the Russian satellite video, if such a thing existed. --Caustic Logic (talk) 13:38, 28 August 2013 (UTC)

Put simply, then: Alleged Proof = A dude was nervous. --Caustic Logic (talk) 13:53, 28 August 2013 (UTC)

Can I get a second opinion on this? I ran ahead feeling it was simple genius to notice this question, but my girlfriend thinks I must be missing something, because simply ignoring the answer is too obvious and stupid a thing for them to do.

Sorry, yeah, from your first quote the panicking caller was "demanding answers for a nerve agent strike that killed more than 1,000 people". How did he know about that complete picture "truth" not even Doctors without Borders and others have yet found? Frankly, given the sources for this, I think the answer to your "where is the response" question simply is "they didn't think their nonsense through, it's just throw-away FUD after all". I saw it making the rounds a bit lately, though, so showing why it makes no sense can still be important. --CE (talk) 00:03, 30 August 2013 (UTC)

Cool. Good point on the 1,000 dead big picture thing, except that's likely the writer's description - he just asked about this rumored attack, as he was hearing then. That's why direct quotes are good. I like calling this real, am finishing up the article after doubting it a bit. Need to shorten it a bit more, link here soon hopefully.--Caustic Logic (talk) 12:38, 30 August 2013 (UTC)

Other

Is there other? --Caustic Logic (talk) 11:18, 28 August 2013 (UTC)

Sources

August 21

- Suspiciously swift opposition activist blog, bound to have accusations, news, clues, etc: <http://www.facebook.com/ChemicalMassacre21082013> --Caustic Logic (talk) 23:34, 21 August 2013 (UTC)
- Reddit page with collection of sources (http://www.reddit.com/r/syriancivilwar/comments/1kry33/live_thread_stream_of_videos_coming_out_of/) posted early on before it made the rounds (14 hours before my post here which means around 2-3 AM UTC), a second tweet (https://twitter.com/AlArabiya_Eng/status/370047549287043073) with now 500 dead. Around an hour later, the first version of an article is announced (https://twitter.com/AlArabiya_Eng/status/370061486862770176). That article (<http://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/middle-east/2013/08/21/Syrian-activists-at-least-500-killed-in-chemical-attack-on-Eastern-Ghouta.html>) still says 500 in the link but now headlines 1300 dead. It's a

patchwork of all kinds of "reactions" and "statements" thanks to apparently many edits. --CE (talk) 11:38, 22 August 2013 (UTC)

- Activists say more than 200 killed in gas attack near Damascus (<http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/08/21/us-syria-crisis-gas-idUSBRE97K07O20130821>) – Reuters, Aug 21, 2013 6:05am EDT

*Activists said rockets with chemical agents hit the Damascus suburbs of **Ain Tarma, Zamalka and Jobar** before dawn. A nurse at Douma Emergency Collection facility, Bayan Baker, said the death toll, as collated from medical centers in the suburbs east of Damascus, was 213.*

"Many of the casualties are women and children. They arrived with their pupil dilated, cold limbs and foam in their mouths. The doctors say these are typical symptoms of nerve gas victims," the nurse said.'

- SOHR Facebook, statement (<https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=410503662391311&set=a.150495128392167.28686.121855461256134&type=1>)

This takes as a given this a "regime" crime, based simply on reports (words) from people whose job it is to always say that. "The SOHR repeats the urgent call on the entire international community, in all its institutions, to put pressure on the Syrian regime to cease its attack on these areas, and to alleviate the ordinary civilians from the deadly consequences of its war."

Some good comments, one by me anyway.

When will the SOHR explain how it knows this massacre was "committed by the regime?" I'm presuming some toxic gasses were widely used in this rebel-infested area. As the timing and nature of this planned attack only suit the rebel cause, not the government's, the leap to the less logical presumption requires some explanation. Is it just that rebels said it was the other side? That's my suspicion. I'm presuming about 99% of rebels are innocent of this, but did they check with the local units of ISIS, al-Nusra, etc. - known to possess and use CW - and honestly rule out all provocateurs with an interest in false-flagging themselves into power? Why on earth would do that? So it must be the regime machine-gunning itself in the foot, gassing more people than ever just ten feet from the "inspectors" (investigators, actually) --Caustic Logic (talk) 09:57, 22 August 2013 (UTC)

- Chemical weapon claims: Two Syrian activists' diverging viewpoints (<http://observers.france24.com/content/20130822-chemical-weapons-claims-syrian-activists>) – France24, August 22, 2013

*Early on Wednesday, several rebel-held villages in the eastern suburbs of Damascus were **heavily bombed** by the Syrian army. Activists from this village have accused the Syrian regime of using chemical weapons during this operation.^[3]*

Good source and add, thanks. Worth a ref add. Half-skeptical, half-telling. --Caustic Logic (talk) 10:41, 23 August 2013 (UTC)

- Syria sarin claims unlikely to spur US military action (<http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2013/8/22/why-syria-chemicalweaponsclaimsareunlikelytopromptusintervention.html>) – Al Jazeera, August 22, 2013
- Syria: Witnesses Describe Alleged Chemical Attacks (<http://www.hrw.org/news/2013/08/21/syria-witnesses-describe-alleged-chemical-attacks>) – Government Should Give UN Investigators Immediate Access – HRW, August 21, 2013

Skeptical Sources

- Penny for Your Thoughts (truth exists; only lies are invented): "Chemical attack" conveniently staged and timed in Syria. Planned Staged Psy-op. (<http://pennyforyourthoughts2.blogspot.com.au/2013/08/chemical-attack-conveniently-staged-and.html>) --Caustic Logic (talk) 09:57, 22 August 2013 (UTC)
- Hot Air.com: Syrian rebels claim Assad used chemical weapons, over 1000 dead (<http://hotair.com/archives/2013/08/21/syrian-rebels-claim-assad-used-chemical-weapons-over-100-dead/>) - but skepticism is still allowed. Some reasonable starter questions here. --Caustic Logic (talk) 23:34, 21 August 2013 (UTC)
- Images of Death in Syria, but No Proof of Chemical Attack (http://www.nytimes.com/2013/08/22/world/middleeast/syria.html?pagewanted=2&_r=1&smid=tw-share&&pagewanted=all) , NYT, August 21, 2013. This is a much more level-headed article than I would have expected from the NYT so credit where credit is due and I put it here under "skeptical sources". Also a good summary. Interesting detail:

At least one photograph (<https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=648713875152576&set=a.228986480458653.65498.225790024111632&type=1>) posted on Facebook by an activist showed what looked like a makeshift rocket. But loyalist militias and Hezbollah have both fired makeshift rockets at rebel positions in this war, and could presumably be suspects for any attacks with improvised rockets on rebel-controlled neighborhoods.

--CE (talk) 13:54, 22 August 2013 (UTC)

- Expert casts doubt on Syria chemical weapons footage (<http://www.euronews.com/2013/08/21/expert-casts-doubt-on-chemical-weapons-footage-from-syria/>) – Euronews, 21 August, 2013 (video (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dh4GHMqONMo>))
- The evidence of chemical attack seems compelling – but remember - there's a propaganda war on (<http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/comment/the-evidence-of-chemical-attack-seems-compelling--but-remember--theres-a-propaganda-war-on-8778918.html>) – Patrick Cockburn / *The Independent*, 21 August 2013
- Syria: Chemical Attack in Ghouta 'an Accident Caused by Free Syrian Army' (<http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/articles/500506/20130821/syria-chemical-attack-accident-caused-free-syrian.htm>) – GIANLUCA MEZZOFIORE / *International Business Times*, August 21, 2013

He added that the idea that the FSA is single and unified is "a myth," because "there are different factions and something like that could be a win/win for them: launch the attack and raise amount of profile of their cause by the UN."

Sorry, timing, nature, etc. considered, accident is almost as stupid as the official story. Well, at about the mid-point between the extremes of plausibility we're faced with. --Caustic Logic (talk) 12:55, 28 August 2013 (UTC)

- Kris Janssen, Media Work Group Syria, Aug 28: Another false flag operation, history repeating itself (<http://mediawerkgroepsyrie.wordpress.com/2013/08/28/another-false-flag-operation-history-repeating-itself/>) --Caustic Logic (talk) 12:55, 28 August 2013 (UTC)

"Rebels did it"

Obama seems (<http://rt.com/usa/obama-chemical-weapons-syria-915/>) to be accusing al Qaeda for the attack:

- Syrian Activist on Ghouta Attack: "I Haven't Seen Such Death in My Whole Life" (http://www.democracynow.org/2013/8/23/syrian_activist_on_ghouta_attack_i) – *DemocracyNow!*, August 23, 2013

P.S. – Why did the New York Times chose to publish this (<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/08/23/world/middleeast/american-tells-of-odyssey-as-prisoner-of-syrian-rebels.html?pagewanted=all>) today? -- Petri Krohn (talk) 16:42, 23 August 2013 (UTC)

- Syria's Al-Ghouta Crime: The Real Story of Liwaa al-Islam Chemical Rockets (<http://www.islamicinvitationturkey.com/2013/08/23/syrias-al-ghouta-crime-the-real-story-of-liwaa-al-islam-chemical-rockets/>) – Islamic Invitation Turkey, 23 August 2013 (Evidently translated from Arabic, no source given.)

Why were the Europeans and Americans hesitant to take an action against Syria in the United Nations Security Council, in the alleged Syrian use of chemical weapons in Ghouta? Arab sources suggest that the US and Western missions had received the real story of chemical weapons. The story wasn't officially distributed, but it is supported by Russian documents and satellite images of the battlefield, and Ghouta.

The images showed that the rockets were launched from Duma at 1:35 on Wednesday.

Facebook pages

- مجزرة الكيماوي Chemical Massacre Syria (https://www.facebook.com/ChemicalMassacre21082013?hc_location=stream) – 4,205 likes
- Chemical Massacre in Syria - Massacre Chimique en Syrie (<https://www.facebook.com/CWMassacre.Syria>) – 3,141 likes
- AQ PRESS (<https://www.facebook.com/aqpress.office>) (Al Queda Press Office) – 280 likes (This is not really related, but I will save the link here, as liking it on Facebook may not be a good idea. -- Petri Krohn (talk) 21:04, 22 August 2013 (UTC))

Victims

- Syria: Thousands suffering neurotoxic symptoms treated in hospitals supported by MSF (<http://www.msf.org/article/syria-thousands-suffering-neurotoxic-symptoms-treated-hospitals-supported-msf>) – Médecins Sans Frontières, 24 August 2013

Three hospitals in Syria's Damascus governorate that are supported by the international medical humanitarian organisation Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) have reported to MSF that they received approximately 3,600 patients displaying neurotoxic symptoms in less than three hours on the morning of Wednesday, August 21, 2013. Of those patients, 355 reportedly died.

"Medical staff working in these facilities provided detailed information to MSF doctors regarding large numbers of patients arriving with symptoms including convulsions, excess saliva, pinpoint pupils, blurred vision and respiratory distress," said Dr Bart Janssens, MSF director of operations.

Patients were treated using MSF-supplied atropine, a drug used to treat neurotoxic symptoms. MSF is now trying to replenish the facilities' empty stocks and provide additional medical supplies and guidance.

"MSF can neither scientifically confirm the cause of these symptoms nor establish who is responsible for the attack," said Dr Janssens. "However, the reported symptoms of the patients, in addition to the epidemiological pattern of the events—characterised by the massive influx of patients in a short period of time, the origin of the patients, and the contamination of medical and first aid workers—strongly indicate mass exposure to a neurotoxic agent. This would constitute a violation of international humanitarian law, which absolutely prohibits the use of chemical and biological weapons."

If 355 died at the hospital, it is conceivable there are another 1000 dead at the attack sites. -- Petri Krohn (talk) 19:58, 24 August 2013 (UTC)

Sounds compelling, but ... how do you get that many exposed, really? They have no people of their own -"reported symptoms," like the rest of us are getting - rebel doctor reports. --Caustic Logic (talk) 00:55, 25 August 2013 (UTC)

2011

- "Military Intervention In Syria", US Training "Rebels" Since 2011 And The Complete Grand Plan - The March 2012 Leak (<http://www.zerohedge.com/news/2013-08-25/military-intervention-syria-us-training-rebels-2011-and-complete-grand-plan-march-20>) – Stratfor via Wikileaks

They dont believe air intervention would happen unless there was enough media attention on a massacre, like the Ghadafi move against Benghazi.

"Assad did it"

- Syrian chemical attack spurs finger-pointing inside Assad regime (<http://www.thenational.ae/news/world/middle-east/chemical-attack-spurs-finger-pointing-inside-assad-regime>) – Phil Sands / *The National*, Aug 26, 2013

Interesting read, but the article does not contain a single verified fact. I prime example of how to construct "truth" from assorted half-truths and heresy. -- Petri Krohn (talk) 07:48, 26 August 2013 (UTC)

Intercepted phone call sources (to move)

- Giftgasmassaker in Syrien: Merkel fordert Zugang für UN-Inspektoren (http://www.focus.de/politik/ausland/krise-in-der-arabischen-welt/syrien/bundeskanzlerin-im-focus-interview-giftgasmassaker-in-syrien-merkel-fordert-zugang-fuer-un-inspektoren_aid_1080416.html)

Der Giftgaseinsatz in Syrien mit mehr als 1300 Toten sorgt weltweit für Entsetzen – auch weil viele Kinder unter den Opfern sein sollen. Der israelische Geheimdienst macht Präsident Assad für das Massaker verantwortlich. Kanzlerin Merkel drängt im FOCUS-Interview auf eine rasche Aufklärung. Doch nichts geht ohne Moskau und Peking.

- Israeli intelligence ties Syrian gas attack to Assad (<http://dailycaller.com/2013/08/25/israeli-intelligence-ties-syrian-gas-attack-to-assad/>) – Focus Online, 24.08.2013

Israeli intelligence can tie the recent gas attack against the Syrian rebels to Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's regime, the German publication Focus reports.

"According to the findings of Israeli intelligence community, Syrian President Bashar al-Assad is responsible for the gas attack in Damascus," reports the publication.

According to FOCUS, the Israel Defense Forces Unit 8200, the IDF's signals intelligence unit, intercepted communications of the Syrian army during the attack.

- German Report That Israel's NSA Affirms Syria Government Responsibility for Chemical Attacks (<http://www.richardsilverstein.com/2013/08/26/german-report-that-israels-nsa-affirms-syria-government-responsibility-for-chemical-attacks/>) – RICHARD SILVERSTEIN, August 26, 2013

The German weekly, Focus, is reporting that a "former Mossad officer" tells them that IDF Unit 8200 (Israel's NSA) has intercepted Syrian government communications that confirms Assad's responsibility for the recent chemical gas attack on a Damascus suburb that left more than 1,000 civilians, including many children, dead.

Now in English:

- Exclusive: Intercepted Calls Prove Syrian Army Used Nerve Gas, U.S. Spies Say (http://thecable.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2013/08/27/exclusive_us_spies_say_intercepted_calls_prove_syrias_army_used_nerve_gas) – Noah Shachtman / *Foreign Policy*, August 27, 2013

What is the chemical agent?

Not sarin?

Médecins Sans Frontières claims that the cause of death is nerve agents. (See Victims above.) Others disagree.

- If it isn't Sarin, what is it? (dead link (http://strongpointsecurity.co.uk/site/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/If-not-Sarin_then-what.pdf)) – Background paper by Dan Kaszeta, 23 August 2013
 - Revision August 26: PDF (<http://strongpointsecurity.co.uk/site/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Revised-Thoughts-on-Damascus.pdf>)

The number of people affected indicates to me that whatever toxic substance was used, a large volume of material is needed. Whatever this was, there was a lot of it.

There is still no firm, conclusive evidence as to what the exact method of dissemination was responsible for dispersal of the mystery toxic substance. Was it rockets, missile warheads, artillery shells, mortar shells, a chemical tanker, aerial spray, aerial bomb, or some other means? Was it a mysterious wall of gas that drifted into the area?

The Jobar Medical Point doctor explains (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RoCT81NcDnc>) that people died because they sought shelter in cellars. (Was this because of simultaneous shelling?) -- Petri Krohn (talk) 23:35, 24 August 2013 (UTC)

Creepy. He might be looking at real symptoms and offering an explanation that fits. What fired-outside rocket pours enough gas to seep into enough cellars to kill 1,000 or even 500, unless they were all crammed in a few well-placed cellars near the impact? I'm remembering the basement "shelters" people were massacred in in Daraya, vs. the basement shelters rebels had forced people into to protect them from shelling or massacres (see here). See especially the last paragraph I just added. If there's sex segregation in the dead, ask why. If they were split up before death, get a chill. --Caustic Logic (talk) 01:29, 25 August 2013 (UTC)

More to the point, "What is the chemical agent?" I don't know. But a heavy gas creeping low, sinking into basements and trenches, sounds like chlorine as WWI saw it, for one possibility. If this description is even accurate. He says the gas is heavy, he might know his gasses. As noted around, it doesn't seem to be a persistent chemical like sarin, properly deployed in a pro manner; as with Khan al-Assal, first responders aren't protected and suffer no ill effects. Maybe different chemicals were used in different areas under different conditions, so no one answer will cover it. --Caustic Logic (talk) 10:32, 25 August 2013 (UTC)

Studying symptoms would help, as long as non-fake videos are looked at. This one (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CBD0fLpwE>) seems completely real to me and fairly distressing (I've only watched a handful of videos so far). And FWIW, it seems to be a family together, not split up like prisoners. At least in this case. Not clear where this is. They *say* there's myosis, sarin-type pupil constriction. That's not in this video, but must be around. --Caustic Logic (talk) 10:32, 25 August 2013 (UTC)

PDF: *If it isn't Sarin, what is it?* Dan Kaszeta, Aug. 23 Revision August 26: (<http://strongpointsecurity.co.uk/site/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Revised-Thoughts-on-Damascus.pdf>)

Many of the principal indicators of nerve agent poisoning are not widespread or are present in confusing manners:

a. Some victims appear to have miosis (pinpointed pupils), but some of them are clearly having a bright light shined in their eyes. Some of the supposed examples are not pronounced.

Etc... --Caustic Logic (talk) 11:55, 25 August 2013 (UTC)

The link above is dead. Kaszeta published a revised version of the PDF today, which is here (<http://strongpointsecurity.co.uk/site/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Revised-Thoughts-on-Damascus.pdf>) . --CE (talk) 17:02, 26 August 2013 (UTC)

FSA: Sarin, Ammonia, and "SC3"

One thing it probably wasn't is what an FSA spokesman said they believed it was. A Reuters report said (<http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/08/23/us-syria-chemicals-idUSBRE97M0U820130823>) :

"Not all of the missiles appeared to have carried chemical warheads, the FSA spokesman said, but those that did were suspected to have contained sarin, a Russian made nerve agent called SC3 and liquid ammonia supplied by Iran."

This chemical cocktail is geopolitically useful, implicating three bad guy nations in this attack on Sunni freedom activists. Likely Hexbollah provided the launchers or some other crucial element. But CRBN expert Dan Kaszeta (report, see above for latest version) finds the claim "suspect" and even "nonsensical" and "perverse." (see pp. 6-7) The deadly agent, carefully acquired and loaded, would be rendered inert by ammonia, he says; "**Liquid ammonia will inactivate Sarin** within seconds or minutes depending on the concentration." This combination would then be about as effective as putting neither chemical in. But then, you can't say the nothing was partly supplied by Iran, and this is a more sinister explanation for why the sarin won't show up in tests; "it was there to start with - they did this to hide it." As for the Russian chemical SC3, Kaszeta never heard of it. It could be a mistranslation, or someone else's name, but the Russians wouldn't call it SC3, he says, as C and S are the same letter in their alphabet. --Caustic Logic (talk) 09:29, 27 August 2013 (UTC)

Thermobaric weapon?

This disciple of Brown Moses speculates that the weapon used is a thermobaric weapon.

- Evidence at least part of Aug. 21st munitions were fuel air explosives, not chemical warfare munitions (<http://syriaanalysis.wordpress.com/2013/08/23/10/>) – Matthew Asheville, "4 days ago"

I too have speculated that Moses' mystery rocket is thermobaric. I am also not convinced it the rockets have anything to do with the alleged attack. One thing I am certain about: this piece is bollocks. Thermobaric weapons have nothing to do with hundreds of dead and dying children suddenly appearing outside MSF / FSA run hospitals, seemingly out of nowhere. -- Petri Krohn (talk) 03:29, 27 August 2013 (UTC)

More thermobaric speculation: -- Petri Krohn (talk) 21:24, 27 August 2013 (UTC)

- Preliminary analysis of alleged CW munitions used in Syria (<http://rogueadventurer.com/2013/08/25/preliminary-analysis-of-alleged-cw-munitions-used-in-syria/>) – N.R. Jenzen-Jones, August 25, 2013

Rebel FAE?

Moved from #Planted bodies?

Isn't this a high tech almost nuclear technology beyond the rebels' capacity? Thermobaric, potent stuff. Or, could a crude version be created with a flammable/explosive aerosol at the right concentration in the air, ignited? I gather that's about what thermobarics (Fuel-Air explosives) do, with specialized timing, dispersal settings, etc. to make it punch the hardest. But basically its a big mass-ignition "foomp." Shouldn't be too hard to engineer in one set place with time to set it up. It's probably packing it all into a portable bomb with many ready to go that makes proper thermobarics more spendy.. --Caustic Logic (talk) 12:59, 29 August 2013 (UTC)

Irrelevant, the bodies here were planted. -- Petri Krohn (talk) 14:42, 29 August 2013 (UTC)

Thermobaric weapons make you bleed out of your head as if shot in the head? That's kind of what it looked like, shot - there - and decaying. Pretty awful. Saved a copy. Too tired to read the explanation, or make any guesses, now. --Caustic Logic (talk) 14:30, 27 August 2013 (UTC)

I don't know this subject, apparently. I was going to guess not FAE because the place is so open. But he says that helps. The bleeding could be from a pressure wave rupturing organs, with blood out the mouth. The sort of ruptured-looking mouths too are rather unusual and must have some explanation kind of like that. I wonder how much sense their positions make for being hit with that wave. I guess it was pushing straight down just like gravity? And he notes the dust in this home of so many people could be from such a wave. Or from construction, which this home is clearly under. IE, people don't live there yet, so why were all these people there? It doesn't even seem like anyone was squatting there, from what we see. So that's one reason I'd think they were planted there.

So then ... put there and then bombed? Bombed elsewhere and put here while still bleeding profusely? Or not bombed? This as far as I go now, more typing needed elsewhere. --Caustic Logic (talk) 10:32, 28 August 2013 (UTC)

Not bombed, I decided, and I think we decided. If this is what FAE effects are like, they rupture people just about the same way several days of decay does. --Caustic Logic (talk) 23:23, 29 August 2013 (UTC)

Gas or aerosol?

Modern nerve agent type chemical weapons are aerosols, not gasses. I find it unlikely that any military CW delivery system would

be able to disperse aerosols into confined closed spaces, like peoples bedrooms or even cellars. Most sources seem to claim the agent was a heavier-than-air gas. Are any gaseous toxins deployed by any modern army as CW agents? -- Petri Krohn (talk) 15:51, 30 August 2013 (UTC)

Also noteworthy is that if it is gas, the UN will not be able to collect any samples. Maybe the US was right when they said it is "too late". -- Petri Krohn (talk) 17:43, 30 August 2013 (UTC)

How much toxin?

What is the amount of toxin needed to cause this many deaths in such a wide area, assuming the agent was spread in the open? If it was only used in "confined spaces", then naturally the amount needed would be far less. (see The Role of Basements below.) -- Petri Krohn (talk) 17:47, 30 August 2013 (UTC)

Delivery system?

Rockets?

The US argument or "proof" for Assad's guilt seems to be based on the premise, that the alleged "attack" was carried out with rocket. (see Brother Nathanael (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nvmXbFxdaAc>) for some clips.) The argument is that only the government possesses rockets capable of carrying the alleged chemical weapons. I am starting to believe that no "attack" in the form described ever happened. (See Murder investigation, part 2 above.)

There are however all kinds of rockets flying around Damascus on and after August 21st. Some of the witnesses describe the eerie sound of rockets. When did these rockets appear in Damascus? Can we find footage of previous government use of rockets in Damascus? If these are rebel rockets, where did they come from. Is this part of a new US financed Saudi delivery of weapons? -- Petri Krohn (talk) 19:03, 30 August 2013 (UTC)

BM-14 type 140mm rocket?

The UN is studying the remnants of a Soviet 140mm BM-14 type artillery rocket of a type that can carry a 2,2 kg sarin payload. The fact that the rocket part is still intact points to no explosive warhead being used. -- Petri Krohn (talk) 19:22, 27 August 2013 (UTC)

- Were The UN Inspectors Examining A Chemical Weapon In Medmah Al Sham? (<http://brown-moses.blogspot.com/2013/08/were-un-inspectors-examining-chemical.html>) – Brown Moses, August 27, 2013

Mortar rounds?

The cheapest and most effective way (for Assad) would be to just pack the CW in mortar rounds. -- Petri Krohn (talk) 14:44, 28 August 2013 (UTC)

- New York Times Bolster Kerry's Baseless Claim That the Syrian Government Used Chemical Weapons on Their Own People (<http://www.4thmedia.org/2013/08/28/new-york-times-attempts-to-bolster-kerrys-baseless-claim-that-syrian-government-used-chemical-weapons-on-their-own-people/>) – The 4th Media, August 28, 2013

Tubes in tunnels?

See also Rebels in Ghouta admit responsibility? above

I am starting to suspect the toxic agents were released locally by rebels. No rocket or artillery was thus used. This article seems to confirm that view.

- EXCLUSIVE: Syrians In Ghouta Claim Saudi-Supplied Rebels Behind Chemical Attack (<http://www.mintpressnews.com/witnesses-of-gas-attack-say-saudis-supplied-rebels-with-chemical-weapons/168135/>) – By Dale Gavlak and Yahya Ababneh | MintPress News, August 29, 2013

(Rebels and local residents in Ghouta accuse Saudi Prince Bandar bin Sultan of providing chemical weapons to an al-Qaida linked rebel group.)

However, from numerous interviews with doctors, Ghouta residents, rebel fighters and their families, a different picture emerges. Many believe that certain rebels received chemical weapons via the Saudi intelligence chief, Prince Bandar bin Sultan, and were responsible for carrying out the dealing gas attack.

"My son came to me two weeks ago asking what I thought the weapons were that he had been asked to carry," said Abu Abdel-Moneim, the father of a rebel fighting to unseat Assad, who lives in Ghouta.

Abdel-Moneim said his son and 12 other rebels were killed inside of a tunnel used to store weapons provided by a Saudi militant, known as Abu Ayesha, who was leading a fighting battalion. The father described the weapons as having a "tube-like structure" while others were like a "huge gas bottle."

Ghouta townspeople said the rebels were using mosques and private houses to sleep while storing their weapons in tunnels.

The question remains, were the toxins released deliberately, or was this some freak accident where "Assad's" bunker busters caused tunnels to collapse on the gas bottles releasing the gas – in all the places at once? -- Petri Krohn (talk) 01:00, 30 August 2013 (UTC)

Russian satellite images?

- Syrian Activist: Satellite imagery proves Syrian chemical weapons attack staged by rebels (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rXLeND1NURI>) – corbetteport, Aug 27, 2013

Ayssar Midani, a French Syrian citizen and political activist, joins us from Damascus to talk about the latest developments in Syria. We talk about the history of the terrorist jihadi insurgency in the country and their prior use of chemical weapons, the latest attack and claims of satellite evidence proving that the attack was not launched by government officials, and the likely consequences of a US-led strike on the country.

Moon of Alabama (<http://www.moonofalabama.org/2013/08/syria-the-most-popular-list.html>) comment, Rowan Berkeley, #23, Description of a description of something reportedly amazing:

*This is out from behind the paywall, and I've watched it now. It isn't on YouTube yet. But in fact it does not contain anything radically new. She names the local Jabhat al-Nusra commander, Sheikh Zahran Abdullah Alloush, as having ordered the firing of the two rockets with chemical warheads. In fact, Alloush is the commander of the Liwa al-Islam Brigade, based in Duma. He is a well-known and documented figure. She says **the satellite imagery actually shows the rockets being fired, travelling and reaching their targets**, and that it has been given by Vitaly Churkin to the UNSC. She does not say whether satellite telephone communications from or to Alloush substantiating the claim were intercepted. The video evidence (and audio evidence, if there is any) has not been released publicly, and this is a typically Russian authoritarian mistake. They will not comprehend the fact that the world public has to be treated as an equal interlocutor in emergencies, not an object to be manipulated by competing rulers. There is nothing else of importance in this video, though of course it is all very interesting. --Caustic Logic (talk) 13:02, 28 August 2013 (UTC)*

You know, with a few minutes to sit on this notion, it does not sound right. This is satellite video that she describes, real time and discernable like a security camera video. Isn't that totally not how it normally works? --Caustic Logic (talk) 13:42, 28 August 2013 (UTC)

This is very fifth hand information but contains important names and leads, at least for further Google searches. I was expecting all of this to have been reported elsewhere. I wonder why no-one has linked to it. Listening more closely, it may be that Ayssar Midani bases her information on the satellite images on what is reported by Islamic Invitation. (<http://www.islamicinvitationturkey.com/2013/08/23/syrias-al-ghouta-crime-the-real-story-of-liwaa-al-islam-chemical-rockets/>) There was a more reliable source for this content, evidently translated from Arabic, but I cannot find it now. -- Petri Krohn (talk) 15:37, 28 August 2013 (UTC)

She says one rocket landed in Jobar and one in Muadameye, IIT says one landed in Jobar and one between Irbin and Zamalka. Differences in details. As to the satellite images and CL's question if that "isn't totally not how it works" - isn't it? Don't they have real time satellite images flow in very small intervals if not outright video these days? I don't know but I suspect they have. If so, the US of course have them as well. --CE (talk) 16:51, 28 August 2013 (UTC)

Also, Duma and Harasta are known for some of the most heinous terror gangs around, remember those corpses they used in several states of decay for new "massacre marketing"? urs has followed their videos with extreme disgust, I recall. --CE (talk) 16:53, 28 August 2013 (UTC)

What's Up With Jobar?

Rebel CW Factory Busted?

- Islamic Invitation Turkey: Syrian rebels' Damascus chemical cache found by Syrian Army (<http://www.islamicinvitationturkey.com/2013/08/23/syrian-rebels-damascus-chemical-cache-found-by-syrian-army/>)

The Syrian army has discovered a storehouse belonging to rebels in the Damascus area of Jobar, where toxic chemical substances – including chlorine – have been produced and kept, State TV reported. Military sources reported that the militants “were preparing to fire mortars in the suburbs of the capital and were going to pack missiles with chemical warheads.” A video shot by RT’s sister channel Russia Al Youm shows an old, partly ruined building which was set up as a laboratory. After entering the building, Syrian Army officers found scores of canisters and bags laid on the floor and tables. According to a warning sign on the bags, the “corrosive” substance was made in Saudi Arabia



Original source:

- Toxic Catch: Syria rebels' chemical lab uncovered near Damascus (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fXezs1YY01I>) – RT, Jul 14, 2013

They made it sound like a new story. It did sound familiar, but I didn't know that catch well enough to recognize it. So, less relevant, but a point for overall intent and a bit of de-bunking a sort-of false story. By the way I think my glitch is solved (the damn router), with some hours to spare before I crash. Will FINALLY see what I can do here.

Islamic Invitation Turkey is mainly recycled crap.

P.S. – I did not recognize the story or the photo either. It was Google Image Search again that saved the day. -- Petri Krohn (talk) 11:30, 24 August 2013 (UTC)

Jobar Attack or Not?

Possibly relevant: wasn't Jobar almost the only suburb *not* reported as effected yesterday? Anyway, no proof this is "the" cache responsible for anything in particular, but a cache, suggesting intent, and intent some of them have allegedly (<http://www.islamicinvitationturkey.com/2013/01/02/us-backed-terrorists-renew-threat-to-use-chemical-arms-against-syrians-and-damascus-govt/>) been talking about, practicing for, and implementing lately. --Caustic Logic (talk) 11:59, 23 August 2013 (UTC)

Jobar wasn't prominently mentioned in the later news, but the very early reddit thread interestingly enough linked (exclusively) to two distinct wikimapia places in Jobar, see what I wrote a bit below under "Videos" about the different locations. --CE (talk) 11:59, 24 August 2013 (UTC)

ANNA News has been in Jobar on the day starting at 7:20 AM, filming the army offensive. In their video report which was now translated into German (<http://apxwn.blogspot.de/2013/08/anna-news-im-c-waffen-freien-dschobar.html>) they state about the CW campaign in the media that "in the first hours, if out of stupidity or desperation, Jobar gets named as the area where the chemicals have been used". And the translator links to this video statement (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RoCT81NcDnc>) . Remarkably, all the maps created later don't mark Jobar as a target, and if one compares what's shown in the video (battlefield reduced to ruins), that's certainly not where the "doctor" is talking from. --CE (talk) 22:32, 24 August 2013 (UTC)

Following the usual chain, syrianews.cc has translated (<http://www.syrianews.cc/syria-anna-news-jobar-chemical-weapons/>) the German translation into English and the ANNA report (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=srmvYhUY6Z8>) has English subtitles now. --CE (talk) 13:42, 25 August 2013 (UTC)

The video: A statement from Jobar's Medical Point regarding the chemical attack (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RoCT81NcDnc>) "The front of Ain Tarma and Jobar in Eastern Ghouta was bombarded with chemical weapons. We noted the incident early, thankfully. We put ourselves on the highest alert." Mentions (rebel) "medical point" responses (since you can't trust regular Syrian medical staff to properly handle a "regime attack") -Zamalka, Douma, and Deir al-Asafir are mentioned. The casualties in Jobar were "massive." "We exhausted our supplies of atropine and hydrocortisone in Jobar." The 25,000 ampules were from there, all used up, he says on people there and I guess in Ain Tarma. He's been counting a lot that morning, thousands of different items already used up, and the sun's still not up (or is this from later on the 21st, or a dark basement?). He's very matter of fact, but clearly agitated, I guess, from how he sort of moves around and makes excited big eyes on a regular basis.

--Caustic Logic (talk) 02:38, 25 August 2013 (UTC)

Video too long. Watching more now, at about 3:45, as he explains the mistakes people made putting themselves in basements, also some people started fires, I guess to keep warm in the August chill, leading to "undesired consequences." Especially so, those people who *burned tires*, mixing the gas fumes with "fires and burning tires," "putting tires on fire added insult to injury," especially for his responders, some of who died from all this, leading him to sob. He suggests an education campaign to tell people go upstairs and don't burn tires when there's a gas attack.

This is fascinating. Maybe I'm wrong, but I think it's a clue. I added Jobar, note, and link, to the front page intro. Jobar was attacked, no it wasn't, don't mention that place. Oops. --Caustic Logic (talk) 02:18, 25 August 2013 (UTC)

- Jobar on Wikimapia (<http://wikimapia.org/#lang=en&lat=33.538247&lon=36.366634&z=13&m=b>) , for reference. I wasn't certain. Northeast Damascus, next to and just more central than the (alleged) stricken areas of east Ghouta. Too far to have easily hit Mouadamiya, if that even happened. --Caustic Logic (talk) 02:26, 25 August 2013 (UTC)

Rebel CW Tunnels Found?

Rinse and repeat, or something new?

- Syrian soldiers find chemical agents in rebel tunnels near Damascus- state TV (<http://rt.com/news/rebel-tunnel-damascus-chemical-940/>) , August 24. The photo is from July 14. The story again cites Jobar. It says:

Syrian army soldiers have found chemical agents when they entered rebel tunnels in Damascus suburb of Jobar, Syrian TV reports, adding that some of them started suffocating. Soldiers "entered the terrorists' tunnels and saw chemical agents," state television quoted a "news source" as saying. "In some cases, soldiers started suffocating while entering Jobar," it said. "Ambulances came to rescue the people who were suffocating," it added. --Caustic Logic (talk) 11:31, 24 August 2013 (UTC)

This is new, also reported (<http://english.al-akhbar.com/content/syrian-army-finds-chemical-agents-rebel-hideout-state-tv>) by Al-Akhbar based on a Reuters item. --CE (talk) 12:03, 24 August 2013 (UTC)

Did not take long to find this. Went to Google news search, it was the top story. Syrian soldiers see chemical agents in rebel tunnels: state TV (<http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/08/24/us-syria-crisis-idUSBRE97K0EL20130824>) . Next, the State TV report which should have images. Relation to recent events will remain uncertain, but worth knowing, obviously. --Caustic Logic (talk) 12:43, 24 August 2013 (UTC)

The relation to recent events is indirect: both are related to the SAA operation to retake the Eastern Ghouta. If Syria had some information that the rockets were launched from Jobar they might concentrate their operations there, in order to secure the launch site and possibly recover some of the hardware. -- Petri Krohn (talk) 18:47, 24 August 2013 (UTC)

The footage from the "chemical warehouse" comes from ANNA News. (<http://www.youtube.com/user/newsanna/videos>) The original HD footage is here. (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-ehDWgEL-GI>) I cannot see any proof for anything here. Yes, they have gas masks and atropine ampules, but that implicates Assad as much as anyone else. ("They knew Assad would gas them.") The pro-rebel doctor (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RoCT81NcDnc&t=1m03s>) says he had 25,000 ampules of atropine he distributed. The chemicals could as well be used for producing explosives – or rocket fuel. The only thing I find sinister in the video is the steel cylinder in the very end, that seems to have distinctive nozzles of a Qassam rocket drilled into its boilerplate end. (Also seen at the end of this (<https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?v=712684592090826>) video. Earlier models (<http://www.vatsaas.org/rtv/misc/aftclosure.aspx>) had real nozzles, but late models economized and simply drilled

Logic (talk) 23:49, 21 August 2013 (UTC)

- The Visual Evidence of a Chemical Attack in Syria Is Overwhelming and Disturbing (<http://www.theatlanticwire.com/global/2013/08/visual-evidence-syrias-poison-gas-attack-overwhelming-and-disturbing/68586/>) – Dashiell Bennett / *The Atlantic Wire*, August 21, 2013

The government has officially denied using any such weapons, but the United Nations inspection team that arrived in the country on Sunday (to investigate previous claims of chemical weapon attacks) has been denied access to the site. As a result, the images below are the only evidence we have of the devastation — and there is a lot of evidence.

In situ videos

After abandoning my earlier working hypothesis of an chemical weapons rocket attack I have started collecting *in situ* evidence here. -- Petri Krohn (talk) 23:35, 29 August 2013 (UTC)

- 2013 8 14 الريف الدمشقي عربين حالة هلع بين المدنيين وإستخراج شهيدة طفلة من تحت الأنقاض (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JLQi_aK0lik) (Damascus countryside Irbeen panic among debtors and extraction martyr girl from under the rubble 14 8 2013) – Igreen Media Office, Aug 14, 2013
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QCy6Fp0uAwo> (field hospital)
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0vSLFE4W0nw> (mass grave, closeup (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0SSI40wOQ-U>))
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CCqGGxkNZBU> (dead chicken)
- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yp_Ju6742Z0 (Coverage of the massacre of the major chemical in East Gouta with activists of the Revolutionary Command Council in Damascus) – Aug 21, 2013
- Long video, 21 min, morgue scenes, interviews, street scene at 20 min.
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a4eEn6AvdIY> (Always :: large number of martyrs by asphyxiation with poison gas) – outside morgue scene
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=47fYGEsKaM> (East Gouta 08/21/2013 father and mother in their children's farewell)
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c4cWrx4zjvA> (doctor)
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rMNVmCoUmK> (bodies outside Kafar Batna hospital)
- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tGynQ_p3I-U (East Gouta 22/08/2013 unidentified children were found victims of chemical) – Igreen CC, August 23, 2013
- Three badly decomposed bodies are dumped in grave. We are not shown where they were found. Evidently not in their beds, as they are fully dressed. **Update** Same 3 children as described above in the house with the planted bodies. -- Petri Krohn (talk) 23:38, 29 August 2013 (UTC)
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c3aBtgvMjZ8> (Haaaaaam Media # East Gouta # eyewitness tells us what happened to the moment of the bombing of toxic chemicals 2) – Igreen Media Office, August 21, 2013
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jtDwRRYms> (Orbin 21 8 2013 bombing of a violent crazy and hysterical with heavy artillery and rocket launchers on the city) – Igreen Media Office, August 20, 2013
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eF4GF1ysNm8> (Some dead animals as a result of the use of chemical weapons in Zamalka - East Gouta) – KafarSousah Revolt, Aug 27, 2013
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JX1oy7R9MUs> (Tour with public security forces to search for people with chemical weapons in Zamalka - East Gouta) – KafarSousah Revolt, Aug 27, 2013
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l0mA8iS2ItQ> (Some dead animals as a result of the use of chemical weapons in Zamalka - East Gouta) – KafarSousah Revolt, Aug 27, 2013
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KK1c0sCV2Ls> (Promo for major chemical massacre in East Gouta HD) – c.m.o algota, Aug 27, 2013
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iKK8nAHnVBQ> (Father finds his daughters among the victims of the massacre in East Gota chemical) – SyrRev15Mar2011, Aug 24, 2013 (repost)
- Morgue scene, real looking emotions.

Eyewitnesses

- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iXBEqkhKldc> (The testimony of a chemical victim during the waiting Committee.) – Damascus MO, Aug 28, 2013

While waiting for the exit of the Committee of the medical point in East Gouta, we interviewed this witness and he told us what he saw during the CW strike, and that he heard strange noises when the rockets.

- Man affected by Chemical Weapons attack on Damascus (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PvsloVbkCHM>) – ANAChannelEng, Aug 25, 2013

A man in his late 20s is seen in this video with the after effects of a chemical weapons attack in the Madamiyah area of Damascus, this comes after an attack that took place on the 21st of August 2013 on civilian populated areas of a number of suburbs of Damascus.

- Family killed, but unfortunately this eyewitness cannot say a word. I suspect this guy has always been dumb. Looks like he has just been recovered from a mental institution. -- Petri Krohn (talk) 00:15, 30 August 2013 (UTC)

UN investigators

- الغوطة الشرقية 29-8-2013 تجميع بعض الأدلة التي حصلت عليها لجنة التفتيش 1 (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WydBU9qPn0) (East Gouta 29/08/2013 compilation of some of the evidence obtained by the Inspection Committee 1)
- الغوطة الشرقية 29-8-2013 تجميع بعض الأدلة التي حصلت عليها لجنة التفتيش 2 (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xXOjYunoYw4) (East Gouta 29/08/2013 compilation of some of the evidence obtained by the Inspection Committee 2)
- الغوطة الشرقية 29-8-2013 موكب لجنة التفتيش برفقة شرطة الغوطة الشرقية والجيش الحر (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9HJppJ7Wfm8) (East Gouta 29/08/2013 procession Inspection Commission, accompanied by the East Gouta police and army free)
- Igreen Media Office (http://www.youtube.com/channel/UC1-gg2ixaGjuth-6QNAfCcQ?feature=watch)
- لقاء صحفي مع قائد لواء أثناء زيارة فريق التحقيق الدولي (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j9dUUU-5qiY) (Interview with brigade commander during the visit of the international investigation team) – Damascus MO, Aug 29, 2013

Abu Sobhi Taha, commander of the Martyrs Brigade always. Giebna on some of the questions during the visit of the UN investigation team to chemical weapons. (Did we see this guy in Houla?)

Video analysis

Amer mosa video

The first video (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GUGrW-SjibU) on the Brown Moses list is one that allegedly shows the nighttime launching of the chemical rockets on Eastern Ghouta. When I order my list by publication time, it turns out to be the earliest video on my list. YouTube metadata API says (http://gdata.youtube.com/feeds/api/videos/GUGrW-SjibU) the video was published 2013-08-21T01:09:55.000Z – that is 4 am in Syria.

- لحظة إطلاق الصواريخ المحملة بـلرؤوس الكيماوية على الغوطة الشرقية حسبي الله ونعم الوكيل فيك يا بشار (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GUGrW-SjibU) (The moment of firing rockets charged chemical Ppleras on East Gouta God and yes you, O Bashar agent)

Note the typo in the word *chemical* (الكيماوية) in the title, on Google it show all copies.

The video is by someone who calls himself amer mosa. (http://www.youtube.com/channel/UC4KAY_VfGH0StTflp8aTALA) He has four videos on his account, all uploaded within the last week. The first (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PVH6jUX5viU) is some Islamist chant or prayer. The second shows a rebel group capture a huge cache of 9K38 Iglu anti-aircraft missiles.

- اليكم الدليل إغتنام صواريخ حرارية مضادة للطيران من اللواء 38 في درعا يتسأل الشهيد الذي قصفه الطيران (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q90dw3pxn1s) (Directory you seize the anti-thermal rockets from General Aviation 38 in Daraa Atsal the martyr who bombed Aviation)

Three hours ago he posted his fourth video, (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Im49MbwZ5fc) Al Jazeera instruction on how to protect oneself from chemical weapons. The videos suggest he is a Islamist fighter, possibly a foreigner who recently arrived through Daraa.

The video of the nighttime launching of the rocket suggests that he (or who ever made the video) was part of the rebel group firing the rocket. I cannot quite understand the title, but I guess it says they are firing chemical weapons at Assad's agents. The timing of the video is also of interest. The video was uploaded before the news of the attack broke out. How could he have known that the rocket pictured was carrying a chemical warhead, unless he was part of the team? -- Petri Krohn (talk) 02:19, 22 August 2013 (UTC)

Spooky pattern, cool find. I'll say hypothetically, they happened to be near enough and panned in to film a firing by the regime at midnight, drive to the attacked area, learn of the chemical gas, and knowing that, upload this so titled at 4 a.m. But I doubt all of that. I'm not sure on the title admitting to firing the missile, a good translation would be needed. I can say firing chemical missile, God, Assad agents are all mentioned. Did you save a copy? Spooky pattern-leaving travelers sometimes pull stuff back down. --Caustic Logic (talk) 11:00, 22 August 2013 (UTC)

Nighttime hospital scene

First video (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T-IkS3HIm6U) starts from the outside, moves inside. Note the green water bottles used for pouring water on victims. These could help identify later inside footage. The first four videos are unlabeled: (1, (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T-IkS3HIm6U) 2, (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=de278-efTBA) 3, (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CBDdb0fI_pwE) 4 (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J_cxvCeVcu8)) A strap is hanging from the camera, helping to identify the cameraman. Starting from video 5 the uploads get a Coordinating Committee style logo, but are from the same set of footage: (5, (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z5Vby7TdnL8) 6, (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OzpLeXcfNJK) 7, (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VGOAmM1rN8s) 8, (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eWhuHM2KifM) 9, (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WfrRsOzXwaw) 10 (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cO8_eZcZkNE)) One more unlabeled video (11 (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cO8_eZcZkNE)) seems to be from the same place, this one shows fighting age men in and around an operating room. One has a needle stuck to his neck, I suppose for injection of atropine. (See Nerve agent antidotes (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nerve_agent#Antidotes)) -- Petri Krohn (talk) 11:31, 22 August 2013 (UTC)

Context

The second (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=de278-efTBA) and first (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T-IkS3HIm6U) videos in the Kafar Batna video set may be the only ones giving these events any context. They show civilians outside the hospital screaming and panicking. Some of them are wearing protection against gas. (The scarfs would be effective against tear gas but not nerve agents.)

The latest (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=30meTj6z_hM) video from Kafar Batna is an interview of a very young boy: *Child injured with poison gas and killed his father and lost his mother tells what happened on August 21.* -- Petri Krohn (talk) 13:08, 22

August 2013 (UTC)

Dead girls in morgue

This (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J_cxvCeVcu8) unlabeled video, (number 4 in the above nighttime series) show the beginning of the pileup in the morgue. Note the distinctive blanket that is shown at the end of the video. It is also shown in the debunk video (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dbXbafI7cCw>) discussed below with more young girls piled up on top of it. The scene is a windowless underground room.

Same blanket, or same design, seen in Damascus suburbs. Possible clue, not strong.
--Caustic Logic (talk) 11:05, 25 August 2013 (UTC)

The same girls, and the corner of the blanket are later shown at daytime, in a large well-lit room with some one hundred other bodies lined up. The video is also uploaded by Kafr Batna Coordinating Committee, this time with their *Kafar Batna City* logo:



- 8\21 أكثر من مئة شهيد من الذين اسعفو لكفر بطنا فقط جراء القصف الكيماوي 8\21 (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZkGa2jr9MBA>) (More than a hundred martyrs who *Asafo* for Kafr Batna only by chemical bombardment August 21)

Note the typo in the word (اسعفو = Asafo), should most likely be (اسعفوا = Asafoa?)

"More than a hundred martyrs by chemical bombardment August 21, only from those who were rescued to Kafr Batna" Jokkmokks goran (talk) 19:33, 28 August 2013 (UTC)

If not a verb but a place, probably Deir al-Asafir, which is nearby. Interesting video. Note how at around 0:20-25 you see at least two men bleeding from the head executed from this chemical bombing. I do suspect prominent use of chemicals, but I think there's a little more mixing of methods here than they're letting on. The beefier ones who pull through, wake up and start choking you as you drag them to the truck -shoot that one, mix him in anyway. And the children... man. Looking at them, it seems they tend to be open-mouthed, heads back, trying to breathe. No slime/foam or discoloration. Could have been suffocated in an airtight chamber somewhere then brought here. --Caustic Logic (talk) 11:05, 25 August 2013 (UTC)

This (<https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?v=712844128742681>) comment video on Facebook notes that many bodies in the morgue scene have syringes placed on them. The hospital staff seem to be injecting them with something, most like atropine. It may be that all the bodies are not dead yet.

Qatar-provided experimental serum to cure Muslims of Shi'ism? Sorry, couldn't help it popping to mind. I would not be totally shocked, but I guess that would only work on the living - which they almost must be, right? --Caustic Logic (talk) 11:05, 25 August 2013 (UTC)

In the first (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T-IkS3Hlm6U>) video in the Kafar Batna set the victims are brought in into the same room that is later used as the morgue in the daylight scene. (Note the bombed-out windows.) -- Petri Krohn (talk) 12:45, 22 August 2013 (UTC)

On site video

By now we should see video of bodies *in situ* where they have died. Also we should see video of the attack sites; empty houses where people left in panic. All we see is bodies at the morgue. This leaves open the possibility that the victims where al-Nusra hostages, killed with teargas in some confined space, and brought to the morgue to die. -- Petri Krohn (talk) 19:52, 22 August 2013 (UTC)

I haven't noticed any yet that seem to be from the crime scenes. Like video silence almost. Well, I haven't watched enough to say, but you're ahead and there seem to be few if any? That is suspicious. Various things can be said about the victims, the killers, and their methods, from seeing the types of homes they were killed, where and how, etc. As I mention above (maybe could move here), there are some clues I half-expect to see that the victims were herded into rebel run prison houses (for their protection) prior to dying there. I took it to the SOHR Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/syriaohr/posts/411643962277281>), first linking to the ANNA CW cache video, then "The reports that many died in their basements is fishy too. Rebels often put their captives in basements before some die there (ex: Daraya massacre). Best way to get masses gassed is to control them and gas all these basements directly. The big clue is gender separation. Any videos of the bodies as found? If the women and men are split up, they did not hide themselves there." And then a follow-up "Any videos of the bodies as found?" And if not, why not? I'm only seeing bodies at the morgue so far, or in trucks arriving out of what seems like a cloud of video silence that leaves me wondering." --Caustic Logic (talk) 11:18, 25 August 2013 (UTC)

This video gives some context:

- Syria Father crying over his Children who were killed in the Chemical Attack on Eastern Gouta (+18) (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o99sMiuYo-w>) – Bashar Assad Crimes Archive, Aug 21, 2013

A father is shedding tears over his children who were killed due to the shelling on Eastern Gouta with chemical weapons by Assad's gangs. A great number of injuries was documented which is not less than 50 martyrs so far in this area. All of them died due to suffocation with poisonous gas. We urge the International Investigation Committee and the powerless world to see how Syria's children are getting killed with chemical weapons by the hands of an imbecile tyrant.

Interestingly the "father" is more interested in calling for the UN and NATO to bomb "Assad" than in the death of his daughters. One must thus conclude that this is a pure propaganda video and provides no evidence on the situation on the ground, apart from the fact that three people are dead.

On closer inspection one must ask: **why does the girl have an open stab wound on her chest?** -- Petri Krohn (talk) 23:16, 27 August 2013 (UTC)

I watched this, forgot to comment. Pretty horrible, of course. He's saying he's her father, isn't he? I'm not buying it, too old. The dead guy next to the dead kids seems a better fit - in his undershirt. "It isn't my turn to eat today," her last words - that was a bit much. And yes, she does have a hole in her chest, right about over the heart. It almost looks like the old creep is sticking his finger in it at one point, and it seems wider after that. I could wonder about a medical reason -there are some conditions where you inject adrenaline into the heart with a giant needle, like in the movie Pulp Fiction. Otherwise, looks like an Islamist stabbed her in the heart with a small blade. Maybe they're Alawites really. Whatever, camera fodder for cannon pleadings. Callous baby-shakers, I hate these people. Hands off Syria, motherfucker! --Caustic Logic (talk) 13:28, 28 August 2013 (UTC)

Related, something I saw, can't relocate now: one sign of CW poisoning was children unable to recognize, specifically, their parents. This is supposedly a classic symptom. Maybe so, but there are other interpretations of a kid on activist video screaming "this isn't my father!" (for example, don't know what they're citing offhand - but at least living kids get to speak for themselves, at whatever risk) --Caustic Logic (talk) 13:28, 28 August 2013 (UTC)

Locations

Via M of O: (<http://www.moonofalabama.org/2013/08/syria-another-false-flag-chemical-weapon-attack.html#c6a00d8341c640e53ef01901ef21c95970b>) *The reported neighborhoods of this reported chemical attack in the Damascus Al-Ghouta area are: Hammuriyah, Irbin, Saqba, Kafr Batna, Mudamiyah, Harasta, Zamalka and Ain Terma. Those are rebel-held areas and have been all this year.*

Looking at the two maps it seems the numbers listed are Hammuriyah: 300, Irbin: 64+17+16+30, Saqba: ?, Kafr Batna: 150, Mudamiyah: ?, Harasta: ?, Zamalka: 400 and Ain Terma: 75. -- Petri Krohn (talk) 23:58, 22 August 2013 (UTC)

Irbin 63 (30 children, 16 women, 17 men), Hamouriya 300, Saqba 69, Zamalka 400, Kafr Batna 150, Ayn Tarma 75 and Jisrayn 16 (3 children) and al-Muaddamiya 70 (plus 300 wounded).Jokkmokks goran (talk) 19:53, 28 August 2013 (UTC)



NY Times interactive map (http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2013/08/26/world/middleeast/Areas-Affected-by-the-Alleged-Chemical-Attack-in-Syria.html?ref=middleeast&_r=1&). Attack areas very close together, suspected launch site in Qaboun, but barely, almost in Jobar. And it shows Jobar hit, about ten blocks away from the launch site. Says UN investigators were attacked on the edge of rebel-infested Moadamiya SW of Damascus. this article (<http://www.4thmedia.org/2013/08/28/new-york-times->

attempts-to-bolster-kerrys-baseless-claim-that-syrian-government-used-chemical-weapons-on-their-own-people/) says A map with a NYT article shows the launch site in a disputed area, which both Qaboun and Jobar are listed as. However, I didn't see the same map there, and it's very zoomed-out and imprecise. --Caustic Logic (talk) 10:22, 28 August 2013 (UTC)

Weather

Weather in Damascus on August 21st: (<http://www.wunderground.com/history/airport/OSDI/2013/8/21/DailyHistory.html?MR=1>) steady wind from the west. -- Petri Krohn (talk) 04:28, 25 August 2013 (UTC)

Mystery rockets

Brown Moses

- Are These The Munitions Used In Today's Alleged Chemical Weapon Attack? (<http://brown-moses.blogspot.com/2013/08/are-these-munitions-used-in-todays.html>) – Brown Moses, 21 August 2013

Large numbers of victims have been reported, and the following pictures have been posted online claiming to show two of the munitions used in the attack. What's extremely interesting about these devices is they match with devices previously recorded in the conflict, reportedly launched by government forces, with it's first appearance in Daraya, south-west Damascus on January 4th.

That is a strange-looking device. Note he says "it seems likely these munitions have been **manufactured inside Syria**," which I guess both sides are capable of, and of course "local activists certainly seem to think they are related," and I would give them some credit for knowing the different parts of their psyop. But why such an odd part when it's been rebels building bizarre new weapons mainly? Why not use any of the stuff they've stolen that Syria technically still owns? Did Syria steal a multinational forces improv weapon and false-flag them with it? Specifics will help narrow down the possibilities. I plan to catch up a bit within the next few days. I also plan to pop in at this link for some comments. I've been well-received there. --Caustic Logic (talk) 09:57, 22 August 2013 (UTC)



UN investigator collecting samples next to the remnants of a SAA thermobaric bunker buster rocket. Note the blast damage to the wall in the background.

Brown Moses has found the smoking gun, a video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y6CZtF6pGvQ>) of his "Mystery Rocket" being launched by what look like a Republican Guard unit.

- Video Shows Assad's Forces Loading, Firing, Munition Linked To Chemical Attacks (<http://brown-moses.blogspot.com/2013/08/the-smoking-gun-video-shows-assads.html>) – Brown Moses, 28 August 2013

The problem with the evidence is that it is Brown Moses himself that has linked the rocket type to alleged CW attacks. Most likely the mystery rocket is in fact a thermobaric weapon, and has nothing to do with CW or even August 21st. -- Petri Krohn (talk) 03:17, 29 August 2013 (UTC)

I commented on Brown Moses blog, but it now has moderation on, so it is not (yet) visible. I am saving my comment here.

Now that I see this, it is clear that thing has nothing to do with chemical weapons. The warhead must weight several hundred kilograms. A huge team and a crane is needed to set this up for launch. There is no need to deliver this much of sarin or other chemical agent in one punch. The same amount of toxin could far more easily and accurately be delivered in mortar rounds, or 140 mm artillery rockets. This is termobaric weapon. The true use for the huge cylinder is to create a huge blast. The likely use is a bunker buster; caving in underground tunnels. The range is most likely limited to a few kilometers, accuracy is minimal. Useful in open, unpopulated (or depopulated, as in Syria) areas, but genocidal if fired on a civilian neighborhood.

-- Petri Krohn (talk) 04:12, 29 August 2013 (UTC)

Foreign Policy follows up with a propaganda piece: -- Petri Krohn (talk) 05:03, 29 August 2013 (UTC)

- Were Syria's Nerve Gas Rockets Based on an American Design? (http://killerapps.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2013/08/28/were_syria_s_nerve_gas_rockets_based_on_an_american_design)

Rocket impact site

I am trying to find the location of these (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pc6xL-N6f5M>) two (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h2uBpDxAoJA>) videos (+ one more (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qBKuVxggSJ8>)). It would help to establish the trajectory of Brown Moses' mystery rocket. (<http://imgur.com/a/1nziC>) -- Petri Krohn (talk) 00:19, 24 August 2013 (UTC)

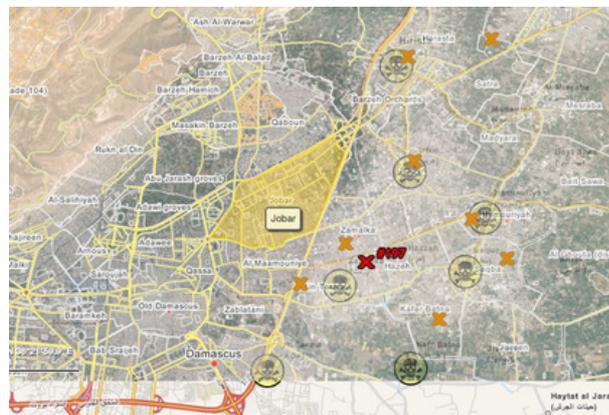
I'm having a look. Seems semi-distinct and possible enough to narrow it down, maybe to one, but not guaranteed or easy. Can we even say what directions/time of day? I can only say either a bit before or a bit after mid-day? Doesn't help much. I'm comparing stills to some areas of Irbin, or will start in a minute. The furrows in that field, at 0:10 looking down them. If late morning, you're looking kind of north or perhaps northwest. If early afternoon, more like northeast. --Caustic Logic (talk) 10:44, 24 August 2013 (UTC)

Sorry, I meant 0:10 in the first video. I'm looking again, still not sure, but it seems to me that sun is pretty high, and this will all be a little closer to the middle, north-south orientation of the range, or looking primarily north at 0:10. Maybe? What we need is a good elevation estimate and from that narrowed time/azimuth options. I don't know what to say - greater than 45 degrees, well under 90. Maybe 60 degrees? Petri? --Caustic Logic (talk) 03:19, 25 August 2013 (UTC)

I think the flight path is perpendicular to the furrows in that field and the building wall. The building is facing

north or southwest depending on whether it is am or pm. -- Petri Krohn (talk) 04:24, 25 August 2013 (UTC)

here's a spot
(<https://maps.google.com/maps?q=Damascus,+Syria&hl=en&ll=33.539535,36.375754&spn=0.004552,0.009366&sll=47.272986,-120.882277&sspn=3.794172,9.591064>)



t=[h&hnear=Damascus,+Damascus+Governorate,+Syria&z=17](https://maps.google.com/maps?q=Damascus,+Damascus+Governorate,+Syria&z=17)) to discuss. Not the one, but perhaps that shape and orientation of a field (or flipped on the N-S axis), bounded by buildings on left and right, pretty big, tall one(s) on the right, open space to the north. It's the major road on the south side at least that doesn't fit. Also, note how the (right, damaged) building(s) is not continuous, but has a split or recess in the middle. That should appear too. --Caustic Logic (talk) 06:11, 25 August 2013 (UTC)

Brown Moses and team have figured out the impact site in this (<https://plus.google.com/u/0/108344897173120412718/posts/6hfwLTS7dAr>) discussion thread on Google+. The location is not in Irbin, as suggested by the original video upload originating from the Irbin CC, but further south in Zamalka. As I initially suspected, the building wall is facing due north, meaning that this is also the direction where the rocket came from.

Note: the spot is included in the inset image, comparison map: app. strike areas orange, rocket #197 as labeled, identified strike area in the red X. Jobar indicated, with parts that are about north. --Caustic Logic (talk) 09:05, 26 August 2013 (UTC)

A thorough analysis of the pictures can be found in this pro-Kurdish blog. The analysis confirms the direction: NORTH.

- Analysis on the origin of CW missile #197 that landed in Ghouta, Syria. (<http://thekurdishcause.blogspot.fi/2013/08/analysis-on-origin-of-cw-missile-191.html>) – August 25, 2013

I am still not convinced this is a chemical rocket and even if it is, it has anything to do with the hundreds of deaths. If the damage to the wall of the nearby building is related to a blast from the rocket, then I suspect the mystery rocket is a thermobaric weapon. -- Petri Krohn (talk) 04:41, 26 August 2013 (UTC)

P.S. – I had a closer look at the photos. I now think the angle of impact is at a 40 degree angle to the east-west furrows, making the direction from northwest. This would make Jobar and Qaboun possible origins for the rocket. (I do not think it can fly much over 2 km.) -- Petri Krohn (talk) 05:05, 26 August 2013 (UTC)

You'd better make it from the northwest, because everyone's saying north=SAA. ;) I had a look at all this. What a weird-looking bend. Are we sure that means it didn't come almost straight down? Somehow that would help explain it, to me. I'm not 100% on the spot chosen (<https://maps.google.com/maps?q=%2B33%C2%B0+31%27+14.62%22,+%2B36%C2%B0+21%27+26.81%22&ie=UTF8&ll=33.520811,36.357547&spn=0.002281,0.005284&t=h&z=18>), but it is an uncanny fit for the images. Tricky, not even in Irbin and barely in Zamalka. The map shows e-w here is a couple degrees off, towards the west. So right there, 360 is actually 258 or so. Jobar to the northwest is one area that's sort of in the middle of all these, as the Wikipedia graphic shows (http://1.bp.blogspot.com/-cuQB3-FTo1U/UhnT_Vmf0MI/AAAAAAAAAB0/sNiS5TKBUcI/s1600/Ghouta_chemical_attack_map.svg.png). --Caustic Logic (talk) 07:02, 26 August 2013 (UTC)

There is a mound forming on the side of the crater where the rocket head is buried or where the earth has moved sideways. It is pointing some 30 to 40 degrees east from due south. -- Petri Krohn (talk) 14:29, 26 August 2013 (UTC)

Brown Moses does a thorough visual comparison of the alleged impact site to the video: 100% match.

- Finding The Exact Location Of An Alleged Chemical Munition, And What It Could Mean (<http://brown-moses.blogspot.co.uk/2013/08/finding-exact-location-of-alleged.html>) – 26 August 2013

Update: – This whole discussion is an infowar distraction and a waste of time. The weapon has been shown to be a government siege engine, used for "bunker busting" i.e. caving in underground tunnels or for mine clearance. The Brown Moses impact site has nothing to do with the **alleged** CW attack. The physical damage at the site shows that the warhead exploded with a huge blast, almost destroying the nearby building. The blast damage is old, but there is absolutely nothing that indicates the remnants of the rocket are from August 21, apart from "activists say" / activist lies seen on the video. Besides, why the hell are these activist filming this empty field anyway, when they could and should be filming the empty homes of the dead victims. They know that the rocket is old, yet they are involved in this fraud anyway. -- Petri Krohn (talk) 14:58, 29 August 2013 (UTC)

Dunno, on the picture the thing looks more like a drainspout than a rocket. And very clean. --CE (talk) 10:39, 30 August 2013 (UTC)

Agreed the rocket looks weird. The bent plating and bent everything, it looks un-flyable, like plumbing junk jammed in the ground. Petri, where has it been ID'd as a government weapon? Brown Moses, I guess? I like your new position. These might well be a total distraction. The building damage is old and if this was really fired into that dirt, it's what did it, some time ago. CE, that looks like a different scene. If I thought they were related (possible but not likely IMO),

more impact sites would be good to look at for the different angles at different sites to find a center of the radii. I'm moving the picture to Un response section. --Caustic Logic (talk) 11:50, 30 August 2013 (UTC)

Qaboun rocket launches

Qaboun MediaOffice (<http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCTV23jYn9US1AT7Va8R-uXg>) is publishing videos of rocket launches from some clearing in the residential area of Qaboun. I understand these to rebel rockets. (Overall I doubt if the SAA ever uses rockets for anything. It would only produce random shelling, and we have never seen proof of that. "Assad gangs" seem to be using heavy artillery. (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4J8dqnXpsUA>))

- 2013-8-25 هالام جدا || القاوبن - لحظة إطلاق الصواريخ من تكتة الوحدات الخاصة نحو الغوطة الشرقية (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=exsXdxbvAuE~) (Haaam very I | Kaboun - the moment of firing rockets from the special units towards the barracks East Gouta 25/08/2013)

The correct translation would be: *Qaboun - rockets being fired from the barracks of the Special Forces towards East Gouta 25/08/2013*. -- Petri Krohn (talk) 12:59, 26 August 2013 (UTC)

The title of the videos refers to the SAA Special Forces HQ located in the middle of Qaboun. The implication is that the rockets were fired by "regime" forces. Qaboun, including most likely the Special Forces HQ, has however been on rebel / al-Nusra control from June 2013. See Special Forces Headquarters below. -- Petri Krohn (talk) 03:44, 27 August 2013 (UTC)

This looks almost like a smoking gun! Nighttime launch of rebel rockets from Qaboun to East Ghouta. Uploaded on August 22.

- الصواريخ التي تطلق من الوحدات الخاصة في حي القاوبن بدمشق باتجاه الغوطة الشرقية (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QChTV9yg_2U) (Rockets fired from special units in Kaboun neighborhood in Damascus toward East Gouta)
Note the typo in the word "الوحدات". Should be "الخاصة" = unit.

The daytime videos show rockets being launched towards the west or southwest, thus in the direction of East Ghouta. Now, before even exploring the CW aspect of this, one must ask, **why are rebels in Qaboun firing rockets at rebels in East Ghouta?** -- Petri Krohn (talk) 08:59, 26 August 2013 (UTC)

Comparing this video to the Amer mosa video uploaded (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QChTV9yg_2U) to YouTube 4 am on August 21st, claiming to show chemical rockets fired at East Ghouta, I think it may show the same launch site, maybe even the same rocket. -- Petri Krohn (talk) 09:07, 26 August 2013 (UTC)

I am trying to locate the launch site. The *Markaz Rif Dimashq* mosque targeted by SAA fire in this (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4J8dqnXpsUA>) video is here. (<https://plus.google.com/111963505860127063940/about?gl=US&hl=fi%3Fgl=US>) The launch site is about here. (<https://maps.google.com/?ll=33.549235,36.334727&spn=0.002213,0.004128&t=h&z=19>) (No, not there, but 100 meters to southwest, in the parking lot here. (<http://goo.gl/maps/4NY72>)) I still have not figured out where the camera is located. Could be as far away as the bombed out high-rise tower in the northwest corner of Jobar. The distance from this launch site to the crash site of rocket #197 is 3810 meter in direction 146,25 degrees. -- Petri Krohn (talk) 09:46, 26 August 2013 (UTC)

The location match looks good - I keep being ready to try but someone else gets it. Where filmed from, less important, somewhere pretty tall. That's a government-run site normally? I see trucks and stuff. One important problem though: the title translation you got was jumbled. Go word-by-word and it's more like special units barracks firing towards Ghouta. Special alone translates private. --Caustic Logic (talk) 10:45, 26 August 2013 (UTC)

The large building in the background is the Tishreen Military Hospital. -- Petri Krohn (talk) 16:32, 27 August 2013 (UTC)

More rocket launches from Qaboun: -- Petri Krohn (talk) 09:38, 27 August 2013 (UTC)

- القاوبن | لحظة إطلاق صاروخ أرض أرض من الوحدات الخاصة باتجاه الغوطة (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3s4EB_AR5Ng) (Qaboun | Launching surface-to-surface missile from Special Forces base towards Ghouta) – Aug 25, 2013

If this is the video I watched earlier and I'm reading it right, this isn't firing towards East Ghouta but kind of west and probably a bit south, maybe Moadamiya etc. --Caustic Logic (talk) 14:09, 28 August 2013 (UTC)

More (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LZwIBZS-jR8>) videos (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ddlAXHmfLQ>) from August 22. -- Petri Krohn (talk) 04:42, 29 August 2013 (UTC)

Special Forces Headquarters

Wikimapia says the launch site is the parking lot of the Headquarters of the special forces (Damascus). (<http://wikimapia.org/#lang=en&lat=33.544149&lon=36.330779&z=16&m=b&show=/22166796/Headquarters-of-the-special-forces>) This absolutely, without any doubt **proves Assad did it!!!** (Or then this is all a part of a deliberate, well planned false flag operation.)

Maps published by the pro-Assad blogger Syrian Perspective however show that Special Forces HQ was in FSA / al-Nusra hands on August 16 – or the very least, highly contested. In fact this other Qaboun CC video (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4J8dqnXpsUA>) shows the SAA shelling the area, including mosque, just south of the parking lot with heavy artillery in August 24. -- Petri Krohn (talk) 13:03, 26 August 2013 (UTC)

Another video (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iTRsoOxRE1Q>) from the 18th talks about Qabon under siege of the army. documents.sy reports fierce clashes on the 16th (<http://documents.sy/newsletter.php?action=download&id=719&lang=en>) .



NYT map (http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2013/08/26/world/middleeast/Areas-Affected-by-the-Alleged-Chemical-Attack-in-Syria.html?ref=middleeast&_r=1&) from August 26 places a "suspected rocket launch site" at the southwestern corner of Qaboun.

On the 21st, SyrPer (is that the same one doing the maps on FB?) brags (<http://syrianperspective.blogspot.com/2013/08/first-post-august-21-2013-syrian-high.html>) that Qaboon and those "trapped inside" is about to fall and elaborates:

The news is in and its not good the apes of Arabia or their terrorist mercenary rodent kin in Syria. Finally, the Syrian High Command is optimistic about the next 24 hours in both Barza and Al-Qaaboon. These two abandoned suburbs are falling into the hands of the SAA. Tunnels underneath the two areas have been discovered and closed down leaving the rats with only surface pathways out. They are also being closed. Monzer is in Damascus and tells us that the numbers of dead rodents in these two areas exceed 230 at the present.

Doesn't sound like the SAA controlled the city centre while those rockets were fired. --CE (talk) 13:22, 26 August 2013 (UTC)

Okay, then. Impressive turn-around. I'll say Qaboon is a good sized area with room for numerous control situations at once, in its sub-areas. Shelling the mosque area could be to protect this base, or to rive people out of an area they control including that and the base. The map is not a good indicator. But being "abandoned," if true, might mean even by the military. Rebels could and would run it all. I'll say it's contested. And to about there, or maybe Jobar, somewhere mostly north but a bit west, seems where the tail of that rocket came from. --Caustic Logic (talk) 14:15, 26 August 2013 (UTC)

Who controls Qaboun?

Qaboun and Jobar are important, as the main highways north from Damascus pass between them and Irbeen in East Ghouta. Syria's largest double cloverleaf intersection sits just east of Qaboun. Controlling the area means the rebels could block all traffic north from Damascus. I have often wondered how this effects the strategic situation? Is civilian traffic able to pass on the main M1 motorway? (Update: This July 16 ANNA news footage (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kwoXrYVFLZc>) shows the civilian traffic does in fact flow freely past Qaboun, kind of. :-)

Syrian Perspective's two maps would indicate that Jobar (Jawbar) and Qaboun (al-Qaboon) are the only place rebels have made progress in the summer of 2013. The June 17 map show an attack over the cloverleaf intersection and the August 16 map rebel control (green) in Qaboun. At the current state of the war, most rebel advanced are done by al-Qaeda-linked groups or hard lined Islamists. Regular "FSA" revolutionaries are at best capable of holding rebel-held populated areas. The ANNA report (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=srmvYhUY6Z8>) from August 21 described the rebel forces holding Jobar as "elite units" of al-Nusra. I presume the rebel forces in Qaboun have similar allegiances.



Damascus June 17 2013



Damascus August 16 2013

The current situation in Qaboun is best described by a comment on Syrian Perspectives August 21 blog post posted by Parviziyi on August 24. (Parviziyi is an Assad supporter and a regular contributor (<https://www.facebook.com/notes/bodhibrian-souter/parviziyi-that-syrias-leadership-has-the-support-of-most-syrians/221534611280236>) to *Moon of Alabama*.)

parviziyi – August 24, 2013 at 8:18 AM (<http://syrianperspective.blogspot.fi/2013/08/first-post-august-22-2013-syrian-army.html?showComment=1377357524328#c8572343920619192157>)

I've largely quit reading this blog. But there's an item above that jogged my memory from when I was reading the blog more regularly, a month ago. Ziad wrote above with date 22 Aug 2013: "We predict the fall of Al-Qaaboon shortly, i.e. within the next 4 days." On 12 Jul 2013 Ziad wrote: "AL-QAABOON LIBERATED COMPLETELY".

(<http://syrianperspective.blogspot.ie/2013/07/second-post-july-12-2013-al-qaaboon.html>) On 17 Jul 2013 Ziad wrote: "AL-QAABOON ON THE VERGE OF PURIFICATION". (<http://syrianperspective.blogspot.ie/2013/07/first-post-july-17-2013-barza-and-al.html>)

He made similar bald assertions in July and early August about Damascus Jowbar district, Homs Bab Hood district, and (more ridiculously) the entirety of Idlib province. When Ziad writes assertions like that, Ziad truly doesn't know what he's talking about.

In the fighting in Al-Qaboon we know that the Syrian army has got bigger and better weaponry and more men on the ground than the rebels have. But the question of whether Al-Qaboon will "fall" is a question of whether all the rebels with decide to withdraw from the area and stay withdrawn from it, and decide to concentrate themselves in another area in Damascus. And Ziad has no information basis whatsoever for answering that question.

And if Al-Qaboon "falls" it may mean very little. The Al-Qaboon-Jowbar area a warzone depopulated of all civilians, or almost all. There are a number of other neighborhoods in Damascus that are heavily populated and almost normal today. If you were a rebel in Damascus city and you had your choice between either (a) retaining your fighting presence in the largely empty and desolate Al-Qaboon-Jowbar neighborhood or (b) destroying law and order for hundreds of thousands of civilians in some other Damascus neighborhood, which would you pick? which option would more effectively advance the goal of bringing down government? If it were to turn out that Al-Qaboon does "fall" shortly, it'd no way indicate that Ziad had the slightest intelligence on what he's talking about.

Parviziyi then continues with the topic:

From rebels sources it is clear that the rebel fighters that have been in Jobar-Qaboon since early Spring 2013 (and before) are with the Tahreer Al Sham brigade (<http://www.youtube.com/user/tahrerasham/videos>) and that's same brigade that is fighting there today.

He links to this 22 Aug 2013 post (<http://yallasouriya.wordpress.com/2013/08/22/most-important-events-indamascus-province-for-thursday-2282013/>) by *YallaSouriya*, which names another brigade also active in Jobar the day: *Abu Thar Al Ghafari FSA brigade*. (<http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCCMeCkFPWYpoDgy0pLwJ9Fg/videos>)

I am sure a search for *Qaboun* and *Special Forces* would produce rebel videos of the launch site, most likely with FSA / al-Qaeda in control. -- Petri Krohn (talk) 06:36, 27 August 2013 (UTC)

August 20

- الثوار يحررون مبنى الاتصالات في القابون (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NQsER6Saijs) (Orient News .. rebels liberate a telecommunications building in Kaboun) – TelevisionOrient, Aug 20, 2013

I couldn't tell what footage is from where or get a location on this comms building. Seeing the inside, I wonder if this is where that confirming call the Israelis picked up was placed from? That could be almost as damning as the missile launch itself. Wasn't it the following early AM, less than 24 hours after this footage, that it would've been placed? --Caustic Logic (talk) 23:13, 27 August 2013 (UTC)

I knew the Israeli claim was bogus, I did not know whether it was the Israelis or the FSA in Syria who provided the falsified information. You are right to take note of this. Capturing a communications building the day before for the purpose dissipating false messages is yet another indication of the thorough planing and enormity of the conspiracy. -- Petri Krohn (talk) 01:35, 28 August 2013 (UTC)

I am not really following the details here, yet, but it sounds good, well worth pursuing. I will add a thought. Anyone presented with this theory, and inclined to doubt it for complicating the cool regime-blame thing, will ask this: "If rebels took over the missile base, why wouldn't the government tell us? Especially when it's said the rockets hitting Ghouta came from that base?" It's a good question. I could offer maybe they didn't know (not likely) maybe they're embarrassed (but clearly should get over it), afraid it wouldn't be believed, would sound like a dodge and an admission it was their base that fired it or, maybe, it never was taken over. Or they did tell us, but the fact has been completely obliterated from our telescreens. --Caustic Logic (talk) 12:15, 27 August 2013 (UTC)

Facebook celebrations

There has been an odd element in the early reports of SPIEGEL this morning ... "Assad supporters celebrate" was part of the news. In the article(s) (they publish a lot of newly assembled versions of their stuff over the day) they report (<http://www.spiegel.de/politik/ausland/syrien-opposition-berichtet-von-mehr-als-tausend-giftgas-opfern-a-917781.html>) that "Harasta News Network" published a statement that "On orders of President Assad, may God protect him, and on orders of proud Syrian Alawite Officers, this morning at half past five East Ghouta was attacked with Chemical Weapons and the operation was finished successfully. We are awaiting details of the operation in the next hours". (my translation of what you find in the last paragraph of the German language article). At 10:30 AM (not specified for both if German or Syrian time zones) "the site was taken from the net" (sic) Also, they claim, a facebook page called "Shohdaa.alwatan" claimed that 500 died in a "cleansing operation". A search for "Harasta News Network" only gave a small number of indifferent results, most of them German news articles quoting SPIEGEL. Maybe worth investigating - I don't do facebook. --CE (talk) 00:21, 22 August 2013 (UTC)

Clearly, this sounds like a pretty fishy allegation. Someone may have actually even typed that into an actual loyalist site, etc. Just like you can with John Snow's blog. To me, it only shows that someone in the opposition knows they need some supports here, quick. This admittedly doesn't make much sense. Consider this desperate activist explaining it all ((Observers France 24 (<http://observers.france24.com/content/20130822-chemical-weapons-claims-syrian-activists>))): "I think the regime doesn't care that the UN inspectors are less than 5 kilometres away. On the contrary, by carrying out these bombings despite the observers' presence, they're sending a crystal-clear message to the international community." He doesn't say just what the message is supposed to be, other than that it's so super clear some are mistaking it for an obvious false-flag operation. --Caustic Logic (talk) 10:35, 23 August 2013 (UTC)

U.N. Investigator Response

This is an area to watch closely, and maybe worth some discussion and thought. It's thorny stuff. --Caustic Logic (talk) 11:17, 23 August 2013 (UTC)

Obviously, the U.N. chemical weapons inspection team had just arrived not two days before this to start a two-week mission. They were based in a Damascus hotel less than 5 km away from one activist who said "I think the regime doesn't care that the UN inspectors are less than 5 kilometres away. On the contrary, by carrying out these bombings despite the observers' presence, they're sending a crystal-clear message to the international community."^[3] (exact alleged message unspecified) Similarly, CNN reported this taunt:

"The inspectors will not come," said a resident who didn't want his real name used. "If they wanted to come, they would have come a long time ago. The Assad regime determines where the inspectors go, and they will not let them go there. There is already a siege around Eastern Ghouta from the Assad regime."^[4] --Caustic Logic (talk) 11:17, 23 August 2013 (UTC)

From a Washington Post report:

Ake Sellstrom, the Swedish scientist who heads the U.N. inspection team in Syria, told the Swedish media that he had seen only the television images of the alleged attacks. "But the high number of wounded and dead they are speaking about sounds suspicious," Sellström told Swedish news agency TT, via telephone from Damascus. "It sounds like something one should take a look at."^[5]

And of course, Western powers are demanding exactly that the "inspectors," as activists keep calling them, be allowed to cruise over there and somehow find out if CW were used, but carefully not decide by whom. The pull of events sucking Sellstrom's team into the (rebel-infested false-flag free-fire) zone is immense. They are being played up as heroes - inspirational non-Muslim ones! - who would be immensely mourned if they did show up and see the truth, only to be gassed by "the regime" before they escaped

with the truth. --Caustic Logic (talk) 11:17, 23 August 2013 (UTC)

That's a possible plot, however likely, that might be part of why Damascus won't let them go. As Fabius said, Assad would be caught "with his hand in the till" and NATO bombing would be the most logical next step. So to avert that, maybe Damascus will have to let them go to ... Arbin to Zamalka, what, 8-9 places? By the time it's done, two weeks will be long passed. Or they will get gassed too on the third stop, and "Assad" will be caught hiding the truth, and thus, same next logical step. Or, Syria promises to let them go, once the surrounding countryside is cleared again, which will take way more than three weeks. In case any witnesses in Khan al-Assal remain alive, no one will come talk to them.--Caustic Logic (talk) 11:17, 23 August 2013 (UTC)

Rebel Orders From Aleppo

An "operations room" in Khan Al-Assal has issued a statement (<http://www.documents.sy/image.php?id=2374&lang=en>) demanding that the Investigators first go to Ghouta, or else they won't get access to Khan Al-Assal. The Russians say (<http://rt.com/news/syria-chemical-attack-cooperation-841/>) Syria is ready for "maximum" cooperation. Maybe your first suspicion among the line of "dead investigators are bad for Damascus" was spot on. --CE (talk) 11:24, 23 August 2013 (UTC)

Fascinating twist there. They are really being pushed, geographically, to this spot(s), in a palpable way that's ominous. Also, distracting from Aleppo is central, and this helps show that. Statement should continue: "if you go to Gouta first - ALL sites and there are five more we forgot to mention - and get here, alive, we promise to cooperate fully, and that if anyone gasses you here, it will be the regime, not us." --Caustic Logic (talk) 12:19, 23 August 2013 (UTC)

Investigating Ghouta

By the 25th, almost one week into their two-week mandate (possibly will be extended), it was announced the team would go to the sites of the recent attacks.

- New York, 25 August 2013 - Statement Attributable to the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General on alleged use of chemical weapons in Syria (<http://www.un.org/sg/statements/index.asp?nid=7041>)

On 24 and 25 August, the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Ms. Angela Kane met with senior officials of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic. The purpose of her visit was to seek cooperation of the Government in facilitating an expeditious investigation of the incident in the Ghouta area on 21 August involving the alleged use of chemical weapons.

The Secretary-General has instructed the Mission under Dr. Sellström, currently in Damascus, to focus its attention on ascertaining the facts of the 21 August incident as its highest priority. The Mission is preparing to conduct on-site fact-finding activities, starting tomorrow, Monday, 26 August.

The Secretary-General notes the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic affirmed that it will provide the necessary cooperation, including the observance of the cessation of hostilities at the locations related to the incident. ... The Secretary-General would like to reiterate that all relevant parties equally share the responsibility of cooperating in urgently generating a safe environment for the Mission to do its job efficiently and providing all necessary information. ^[6]

So they drive over there - just where I'll have to see. First thing, unidentified snipers (<http://news.yahoo.com/damascus-gives-green-light-un-chemical-arms-probe-131621829.html>) shoot at the lead vehicle several times, forcing them to give up and go back. Clearly the regime trying to stall them, right? No one dead yet. Gassing won't work outside a basement prison, I decided, so shooting or other hard hits will have to do it if they want to have the regime off these guys. Maybe another try tomorrow. --Caustic Logic (talk) 12:41, 26 August 2013 (UTC)

They should just visit the Special Forces Headquarters parking lot. See who's firing the rockets? -- Petri Krohn (talk) 12:54, 26 August 2013 (UTC)

Not safe. That's where the snipers were shooting from. ;) --Caustic Logic (talk) 14:36, 26 August 2013 (UTC)



UN Investigators take samples at a site in Zamalka on August 28, 2013

They were entering the southwest outlier site Moadamiya when shot at. They managed to investigate there anyway, talking to people in a rebel-run hospital. Samples were collected showing a "chemical substance," the U.N. said after deciding it was not some ... other ... kind of substance. They continue to investigate, there are videos and reports, not collected here yet. At left, one of their members collects soil, it seems, from the site of a rocket strike in the Zamalka area. --Caustic Logic (talk) 11:56, 30 August 2013 (UTC)

U.S. Response

The U.S. response is interesting. Citing Los Angeles Times: U.S. dismisses Syria's inspection offer as 'too late' (<http://www.latimes.com/world/middleeast/la-fg-syria-inspectors-20130826,0,4207088.story>) :

The Obama administration dismissed Syria's offer to allow inspectors access to the site of a suspected chemical weapons attack as having come "too late" and declared there was "very little doubt" the government had used poison gas against civilians...

or in essence, it's too late for facts to disrupt this total certainty. Who knew it had a gestation period less than five days? Now we can never go back, no matter what the facts say. There is and can be no real doubt. Ever, again. Clearly, there is theatrics to the "ttoo late" blustering. It makes little to no factual sense, but has an emotional impact, a big threatening shout at an insane pitch, designed to shake Syrians into defection and disarray. Problem is, it's been done incessantly at so many volume levels, even this - loudest yet though it is - they might remain immune.

So is actual full-on conflict on the way? I think the signs say no. Consider:

a senior administration official, in a written statement given to reporters on condition of anonymity, brushed aside the Syrian offer...

Is that deniability? Could be, if needed. More hedging even now? Especially now?

Despite the assertion of "little doubt," the administration has not presented any evidence of its own that the Syrian government carried out such an attack, instead citing public reports made by others.

They don't have John Kerry holding up a report and a vial of powder at the U.N., claiming the hardest proof ever the regime dunnit. So far it seems more "it's worth another try" at threats, than a real drive to war. I hope I'm right on that. --Caustic Logic (talk) 11:52, 27 August 2013 (UTC)

On to the logic of the dismissal: It won't hold up.

"If the Syrian government had nothing to hide and wanted to prove to the world that it had not used chemical weapons in this incident, it would have ceased its attacks on the area and granted immediate access to the U.N. — five days ago," the official said. By now, the government has had many opportunities to destroy evidence, including by shelling the areas, the official noted.

Five days of shelling renders a site worthless? Why didn't anyone mention that when they were insisting Syria grant access to a dozen or more sites of alleged attacks dating back sometimes to December? One of those - Homs, Dec. 23 - was on the investigators' itinerary at the moment this major distraction blew up all around them just a few days ago. When was that going to be cancelled for being months too late? The government was still hoping to have Khan al-Assal looked at, five months after they first asked for this investigation. But the U.S. gets all snippy when it takes five days, in the middle of a war zone full of ... problems. Perhaps they're afraid that, after all the bluster about how they'd better get over there, there will be no clues implicating the regime. But they were there a few days ago, everyone's pretty sure, and they're already so convinced that actual gathered facts would just be anti-climactic and a buzzkill. --Caustic Logic (talk) 11:52, 27 August 2013 (UTC)

Motives?

Here is my first draft on the motives of the parties to commit the act. The section should be moved to article space after, maybe some minor editing. -- Petri Krohn (talk) 02:26, 24 August 2013 (UTC)

Moved to Alleged Chemical Attack, August 21, 2013#Motives? -- Petri Krohn (talk) 22:00, 29 August 2013 (UTC)

It never happened?

The government has been sticking to the story "it never happened". (Maybe it did, they just never heard about it.) I would say the evidence is yet inconclusive. There is a huge number of videos, coming from seemingly independent rebel YouTube channels. Most, if not all of the videos are however hospital footage, with nothing that shows the victims or the attack *in situ*. I do not think the dead people are staged, but for all we know the victims could be (Kurd) hostages gassed to death in some "confined space".

The *New York Times* reports: (http://thelede.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/08/21/video-and-images-of-victims-of-suspected-syrian-chemical-attack/?smid=tw-nytimes&_r=3&)

While the veracity of the visual evidence uploaded to YouTube could not be independently established, chemical weapons experts told The Times that the injuries seen in footage from the region did not appear to be consistent with the effects of a conventional chemical weapon like sarin or mustard gas and that the deaths might have been caused by the use of a weaker chemical agent in a confined space.

Russia Today says they cannot confirm the attacks happened:

A correspondent for the Russian TV channel RT Arabic succeeded in contacting local residents in the area of the alleged chemical weapons attack. RT reports, that the locals replied to the correspondent, that they have not witnessed any "poisonous attack" in the area, but that they could hear gunfire.

AINA TV says they were at or near the scene filming with their nine cameras, and saw now sign of the use of chemical weapons:

- Documented evidence of the non-use of chemical weapons in Eastern Gouta today (<http://anna-news.info/node/12226>)

-- Petri Krohn (talk) 01:03, 22 August 2013 (UTC)

This video tries to debunk a large part of the story (now translated into English):

- Fake massacre by Syrian army using Chemical weapons (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dbXbafI7cCw>) – Translated by *Syrians in Sweden*

The same group of small children (girls mainly, like the ones we saw in the Baniyas massacre) are filmed in at least three different arrangements. Each piece of footage is then published by a different rebel YouTube channel. (One (<http://www.youtube.com/user/syriafreedom/videos>) of them is the *Kafr Batna Coordinating Committee*) Did they move the bodies around to film them in different parts of the Eastern Ghouta? For all I know these could be Kurd children massacred in Tal Abyad by ISIS. (See Dead girls in morgue above.) -- Petri Krohn (talk) 10:29, 22 August 2013 (UTC)

Watched that. I agree with their call. It seems she's been presented in three spreads that seem to be described as

different victims batches in different towns. Three times, one victims. Other matches should be likely if so. And yes, they would be that sloppy and usually are. But in one room, we see what looks like about two dozen young girls. As a baseline indicator, this has to be big. I'd estimate 30 boys, 20 women, 30 men, another just-triple-digits on-the-fringes "Shabiha" massacre of certain families is a lot what it looks like, but with no visible wounds. --Caustic Logic (talk) 11:25, 22 August 2013 (UTC)

The debunk is debunked here: The Ghouta Chemical Attack Propaganda Frenzy - Debunked: (<http://the-assad-debunkation.tumblr.com/post/59079756229/the-ghouta-chemical-attack-propaganda-frenzy>)

Arabi Sourì is now claiming (<https://twitter.com/briansouter1/status/371485013629349888>) that some of the child victims shown on video are in fact kidnapped Latakia massacre victims:

Some pictures of the children killed by 'Sarin chemical gas' in Ghouta (#Damascus Countryside) are for children kidnapped from #Latakia countryside and their families recognized them.

-- Petri Krohn (talk) 04:48, 25 August 2013 (UTC)

#Syria Mother Agnes raises critical questions re death of children in 'rebel' held area Where did kids come from?

- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uSCCBnnHgfs>

It never happened? It very damn well could not have happened, in the slightest bit. But I do suspect it damn well did, at least a bit. And I'm damn friggin' mad about it, and behind on the alleged details. I suspect a poison gas was deployed somewhere, and also a large number of people, including kids, were murdered in the rebel-infested parts of Reef Dimashq. Locals "have not witnessed any "poisonous attack" in the area, but that they could hear gunfire," RT heard. I wonder if the kind of shells used were the same ones used on Alawite Aqrab in December, per opposition sources causing all the deaths that occurred there? (<http://ciwclibya.org/syria/aqrabvisiblevictims.html>) Those two were sometimes snipers, and sometimes hacked open kids' skulls. --Caustic Logic (talk) 10:39, 22 August 2013 (UTC)

Didn't think it through, but the comparison might be better than I thought. The result of the alleged Arab shelling was rebels in control of the area, 500 Alawite civilians in custody, 300 released, 200 unknown. Confined into a single house, they were denied food and water and had their air poisoned with the smoke of burning tires. Smoke, chlorine, sarin, what have you, and recalling that crossing the "red line" is a bonus... If civilians at gunpoint could be abducted and confined (yes) and if people rebels dislike enough or consider expendable still exist in Syria (yes, in abundance) then "the deaths might have been caused by the use of a weaker chemical agent in a confined space. --Caustic Logic (talk) 11:25, 22 August 2013 (UTC)

It never happened? Big picture, above stands, but it seems at least something on the scale of the Houla massacre but with toxic gas happened, perhaps with some battles and dead rebels thrown in, and some creative bookkeeping allowing reports of 1,000 + gassed to panic everyone into "urgent" action. Syria will need to have a look and more carefully say what did and didn't happen. --Caustic Logic (talk) 11:25, 22 August 2013 (UTC)

Videos a Day Early?

According to several Assadist sources the attack could not have happened because "Al Jazzera, Reuter published the news of massacre in East Ghouta, Damascus one day before the massacre happened. (<http://www.islamicinvitationturkey.com/2013/08/22/photo-al-jazzera-reuter-published-the-news-of-massacre-in-east-ghouta-damascus-one-day-before-the-massacre-happened-by-assad/>) " Yeah, pro-Assad Syrians are not very computer savvy. :(Petri Krohn (talk) 14:15, 22 August 2013 (UTC)

Yeah, I read - skimmed - that yesterday as well. :o) What is official Youtube-Time? --CE (talk) 14:29, 22 August 2013 (UTC)

Maybe only indirectly related: If you wanna play a chemical attack victim, better not be ticklish (http://www.liveleak.com/view?i=8da_1377112216) ... ;oD --CE (talk) 14:51, 22 August 2013 (UTC)

RT is sticking to the "wrong timeline" story:

- Materials implicating Syrian govt in chemical attack prepared before incident – Russia (<http://rt.com/news/syria-chemical-prepared-advance-901/>) – RT, August 23, 2013

Despite the 7-hour time difference between Syria and the US, where the YouTube server is located, the mismatch of the dates in the videos raised concerns among some experts about the exact time of the upload.

Even the Russian Foreign Ministry spokesman, Aleksandr Lukashevich is falling for this. "The materials of the incident and accusations against government troops had been posted for several hours before the so-called attack. Thus, it was a pre-planned action." Doesn't Russia have a fucking intelligence service!

Agreed, big fail. It says right there it's U.S. eastern time, which I think is actually 8 hours earlier. 4 am Syria = 8 pm "the previous day" on Youtube. 4 hours of it followed. The actual news story should have been "Despite the 7-hour time difference between Syria and the US, where the YouTube server is located, the mismatch of the dates in the videos raised concerns among some experts about the exact time of the upload," and thus not run! When they say pre-planned, I hope they don't mean this, but just that you don't do this without planning. Or based on some other evidence they can share. --Caustic Logic (talk) 15:10, 24 August 2013 (UTC)

Is this possibly a subtle joke, or a "soft power" trick that they too can push transparent propaganda, or something? For a nation with 11 time zones, you think they'd get this issue better than most. --Caustic Logic (talk) 15:10, 24 August 2013 (UTC)

Looking at YouTube Gdata, I get timestamps 2013-08-21T03:37:12.000Z (<http://gdata.youtube.com/feeds/api/videos/L6B8wq1VXN0>) 2013-08-21T02:51:02.000Z (<http://gdata.youtube.com/feeds/api/videos/VGOAmM1rN8s>) and 2013-08-21T01:00:54.000Z (http://gdata.youtube.com/feeds/api/videos/PXwS4_E3OQE) for the three videos embedded on the RT page. -- Petri Krohn (talk) 20:39, 23 August 2013 (UTC)

This is a trick I will need to learn (later). Specifics, understood, see? Z = GMT. The last one is almost, maybe, problematic. It's said the attacks started around 4 am local (I'm hazy). That last one is posted 4:01 local time (GMT +3). That's just barely too early, depending. Probably not. But anyway, that's how you would go about finding things that were up too early, suggesting pre-planning/foreknowledge on the rebel side. It's worth watching for, for sure. Not just with videos, but anywhere. And for foreknowledge on the other side too, for that matter. Nothing credibly reported yet. I suspect anything found will be vague and unprovable, but surely interesting and likely true. * --Caustic Logic (talk) 13:51, 27 August 2013 (UTC)

* if it blames the rebels. What can I say? They have all the motive and that's the #1 thing. --Caustic Logic (talk) 13:53, 27 August 2013 (UTC)

The Lede (http://thelede.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/08/23/confused-by-how-youtube-assigns-dates-russians-cite-false-claim-on-syria-videos/?_r=1&) says actually Youtube's time zone is set to California, Pacific time. That's my own time zone, but it says it's 10 hours behind Syria, not 11. I might be wrong but I thought PST was -8 from GMT. Anyway, this means there were at least six hours of Aug. 21 that would appear on Youtube as Aug. 20, 6 Pm to midnight California, = the first six hours of the attack, or about all of it. Only things filmed after about 10 am in Syria can even hope to be shown as posted on Aug 21. --Caustic Logic (talk) 12:09, 26 August 2013 (UTC)

Maybe the activist did not know when the massacre was supposed to have started. Whatever time is given in the press is only deduced from the earliest timestamps on the videos. Has any local eyewitness ever stated *when* the massacre happened. -- Petri Krohn (talk) 03:52, 30 August 2013 (UTC)

People have given times, earlier than I thought even. For example, NYT: "It began just after 2 a.m. Those who heard the explosions and lived to tell about them were surprised at the sound, saying it was "like a water tank bursting" or "like opening a Pepsi bottle." Then came the smell, which burned eyes and throats, like onions or chlorine.
<ref="NYTI">*Blasts in the Night, a Smell, and a Flood of Syrian Victims* (http://www.nytimes.com/2013/08/27/world/middleeast/blasts-in-the-night-a-smell-and-a-flood-of-syrian-victims.html?pagewanted=1&_r=0) By BEN HUBBARD, MARK MAZZETTI and MARK LANDLER, *New York Times*, August 26, 2013</ref>

Chemicals injected after death?

The morgue video (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZkGa2jr9MBA>) from Kafr Batna shows victims being injected with syringes, as noted (<https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?v=712844128742681>) here. Assad supporters have picked on this an are now claiming (<https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?v=563219720424586>) the victims were injected after death, apparently to plant false evidence for the UN investigators to find. -- Petri Krohn (talk) 10:40, 23 August 2013 (UTC)

One way or another, they got samples running barricades to the U.N. people, should be there by now with a few km involved. I'm guessing it's samples of human blood they got chemicals into. As that's the whole idea, this sounds plausible. As for doing it right there on video, sure, I could see that audacity, given what I've seen. Otherwise, I don't know. Kind of seems they were killed by gassing, so ideally just that exposure is what would be most realistic.--Caustic Logic (talk) 15:10, 24 August 2013 (UTC)

I do not believe there is anything fake in any of the videos. I think all the people in the videos genuinely believe they were gassed by "Assad". How would they know if it was al-Qaeda that launched the rockets? -- Petri Krohn (talk) 18:38, 24 August 2013 (UTC)

References

- ↑ ^{1.0} ^{1.1} A statement from Jobar's Medical Point regarding the chemical attack (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RoCT81NcDnc>) Youtube video, posted August 21 by Free Syria Translators
- ↑ ^{2.0} ^{2.1} Exclusive: Intercepted Calls Prove Syrian Army Used Nerve Gas, U.S. Spies Say (http://thecable.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2013/08/27/exclusive_us_spies_say_intercepted_calls_prove_syrias_army_used_nerve_gas) By Noah Shachtman, Foreign Policy magazine, the Wire, August 28, 2013
- ↑ ^{3.0} ^{3.1} Chemical weapon claims: Two Syrian activists' diverging viewpoints (<http://observers.france24.com/content/20130822-chemical-weapons-claims-syrian-activists>) France24, August 22, 2013
- ↑ Syrian activists: Videos show chemical weapons used (<http://www.cnn.com/2013/08/21/world/meast/syria-civil-war/>) By Samira Said and Ashley Fantz, CNN, updated 8:27 PM EDT, Wed August 21, 2013
- ↑ Head of UN chemical weapons team in Syria says he wants to look into latest gas attack claim (http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/syrian-pro-opposition-groups-claim-dozens-killed-in-poisonous-gas-attack-near-damascus/2013/08/21/8bd0791a-0a2b-11e3-89fe-abb4a5067014_story.html) Washington Post, August 21, 2013
- ↑ Statement Attributable to the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General on alleged use of chemical weapons in Syria (<http://www.un.org/sg/statements/index.asp?nid=7041>) UN. New York, 25 August 2013

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